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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

(No. I.)

THE ANTICHRIST,

NOT

ATHEISTIC ANARCHY,

BUT

A FALSE ECCLESIASTICAL SYSTEM.

BY JAMES BIDEN,

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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

I.

THE Antichrist, not Atheistic Anarchy, but a False Ecclesiastical System.

II.

The Church on earth, not a body having an ecclesiastical organization, but composed of members of Christ's body in spiritual union.

III.

The term "kingdom of heaven," as used by our Lord, has two meanings: one for the nominal kingdom, the other for the spiritual kingdom. The one meaning, as applied to the nominal kingdom, including good and bad, is not the Church. The other, as applied to the spiritual kingdom on earth, is the Church.

IV.

In the nominal kingdom is a ministry, or teachers. In the spiritual kingdom, or the Church, is universal priesthood.

V.

Absolution is a power not granted to the ministry as such, but is exclusively granted to the Church—the members of Christ's body.

VI.

Water baptism the mode of admission to the nominal kingdom;

spirit baptism the means of admission to the spiritual kingdom—the Church.

VII.

The eucharist not a sacrifice, but spiritual sustenance.

VIII.

Order of burial unimportant.

IX.

A Church not *the* Church, nor a branch of *the* Church. A Church should be established upon Gospel truths, at the same time recognising its subordinate position. The fault of the past has been the substituting a humanly constituted Church, for Christ's Church; the setting up an idol called the Church, and giving to it the position due alone to the rightful Church. This false state of things is the harlot of Scripture, and, as such, must be cast down.

ADDRESS.

THE foregoing truths the Author purposes to maintain in a series of sixpenny numbers. He will not limit himself to a stated time for their publication, but he hopes to be prepared with a number monthly, and thus complete the series. He trusts alone in the Divine favour, and he believes he is working in an appointed field; but should his labours be checked, he will know how to bow, for God's will is his will, and God alone knows what is needed to be done in His vineyard.

The Author would have preferred to have laboured unknown. He began his labours anonymously, and he would have continued them, but he was brought to believe it a dereliction of duty not to declare himself. Our Lord's words have had their influence upon him: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

In elucidating the whole subject before us, a difficulty, which encircles it, presents itself. The Church, in union with Christ, is a spiritual body, but yet manifest in the flesh, and to whose members great gifts and promises are made. How define to man's circumscribed mind the limits of this spiritual body, so as to determine, satisfactorily to men, to whom the gifts and promises belong? This, though difficult, is not unattainable, and, by God's help, may be made clear and intelligible. In dependance upon the Divine aid, the author applies himself to the task.

THE ANTICHRIST, NOT ATHEISTIC ANARCHY, BUT A FALSE ECCLESIASTICAL SYSTEM.

THE writer of an article on Jansenism, in the January Number of the Journal of Sacred Literature, has inserted in a note an opinion upon Antichrist, which, in my estimation, cannot fail to be injurious. Truth is already sufficiently overlaid. The opinion promulgated adds thereto. It is enough for Papists to assert that *the Antichrist* is atheism; that Protestants should do so increases the delusion.

The writer has given an interesting account of the Jansenists. The dialogue between the Nuncio Cappucini and the Archbishop Van Santen, furnishes sufficient evidence to leave an unprejudiced mind to a knowledge, or, at the least, to a suspicion, of the Antichrist, and though the writer acknowledges the many sins of Popery, he yet infers that the Antichrist is not Popery, but atheistic anarchy.

Let him be heard in his own words. He says—"Some may be surprised that I should speak of the Antichrist not as being the Papacy, but something far worse."

"It is said in Scripture of the Antichrist, that *all shall worship him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life*. Now, really, it is quite beyond my credulity to imagine that there are *no wicked men* around us except Roman Catholics; for so it must be, if all except the elect of God own the Papacy."

"I should also be repugnant to admit a theory which would necessarily exclude from salvation, not only Pascal, Fenelon, Gaspare Confarini, Quesnel, and many others, who owned the authority of Rome, but also Luther, Melancthon, Tyndale, and all the early-reformers, who once had been in that communion. Had the Papacy been the Antichrist, none of these could have been saved; for, 'if any man worship the beast and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone.'"

"When France rejected Popery, it was seen and felt that there was a form of evil far worse—*atheistic anarchy*. This is an answer to any who say—What form of Antichristianism can be worse than Popery? I ask, are we to learn nothing from the lessons which God brings before the eyes of men? It is not sixty years ago since our fathers had this terrible display of evil before them, and is it possible that it has been already forgotten?"

"I do not palliate Popery, but, with all its evils, *some* have been saved within its nominal pale; Antichristianism, on the contrary, leads all its votaries to inevitable destruction. Popery may do much in carrying out forms of iniquity, which will at length issue in the rejection of God and of Christ. There have been *many* Antichrists, but THE ANTICHRIST will at length appear in his full infidel power."

This quotation furnishes the writer's belief that THE ANTI-Christ has not yet appeared, but that many Antichrists have appeared, and THE ANTICHRIST has yet to appear as a full infidel power. I agree with the writer that many Antichrists have appeared, but I differ with him in that THE ANTICHRIST has yet to appear.

The writer of this opinion, we learn by a note, has written a work on prophecy, entitled "The Man of Sin;" I have, also, written on prophecy a book entitled "The True Church," in which the man of sin is largely portrayed by the exposition of much of the Apocalypse, and of other portions of the Holy Scrip-

tures. My conclusion, like that of many other writers, is utterly at variance from the opinion expressed in the extract furnished.

There is no denying that there may be forms of evil more terrible than the catalogue of crimes which the Papacy can present. Bad as they are which the list furnishes, they are probably exceeded by the atrocities committed by the wild, ungovernable, passions of infuriated madmen broken loose from the restraints of divine and human laws. I say "probably." It must not be forgotten that anarchy acts in open day, in defiance of every ordinary restraint; Popery acts covertly, and, with smooth and oily words to the world, commits her violence in the dark cell and dreary dungeon.

That the writer has vague and loose notions about THE ANTICHRIST is certain. And the difficulty, which he has himself created, is by taking a single text of Scripture, and expounding it without reference to the whole context; consequently, he has misunderstood it. It has presented a difficulty to his mind, and on that account, it would appear, that he casts aside the whole range of prophecy which bears upon the important subject. And because the text says "*all* shall worship him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life," the writer "has not the credulity to imagine that there are no wicked men around us except Roman Catholics;" and he concludes at once that the Papacy, as a system, is not the Man of Sin, consequently, not THE ANTICHRIST, but that the Antichrist is to be found in universal infidelity, or universal rejection of Christ. He concludes that every human being not written in the Lamb's book of life shall worship Antichrist; and, consequently, that every heathen man, every nominal Christian man, all not having a saving knowledge of Christ, will worship Antichrist. And that this universal infidelity will hereafter assume a form of concentrated action which will develop a future, and THE, ANTICHRIST.

In opposition to this, I assert that THE ANTICHRIST is the embodiment of a system, existing, which had its rise at a given period,

will continue for a given time, and will meet with an overthrow to its extinction at a declared period.*

If the question of which is the Man of Sin, or THE ANTI-Christ, depended upon ascertaining whether every Roman Catholic has been, and is, a lost man, the question would soon be answered. There could be, in that case, no difficulty in determining that Roman Catholics, as a whole, do not embody THE ANTI-Christ. But the question does not depend upon such an answer.

It should be borne in mind that the Scriptures deal with the chief features of a system; and when they describe these they regard them in their essential qualities. And we all know that there are many grades of character, and shades of belief, within the circle of any one system. When, therefore, Popery is described, it is portrayed by its strongest lineaments. If there be a condemnatory passage, it refers to those possessing essentially the portrayed lineaments. The passage, however, referred to, is not so much condemnatory as it is descriptive.

THE ANTICHRIST is described by the prophet Daniel, and by Jesus Christ in the Revelation, in terms that render it impossible to apply them to that vague and indefinite perception which unbelief, or ignorance, or universal infidelity, presents.

If atheism be the Antichrist to arise, it will be singular, indeed, should it arise in a form in accordance with the features portrayed by the holy penmen. It will be singular if, hereafter, another train of circumstances should again fulfil all the conditions. If another beast from the sea should again change or glide into a lamb-horned beast, and progress into a scarlet-coloured beast carrying a woman, or the false one with whom the kings of the earth commit spiritual fornication. It will be remarkable if atheistic anarchy dress itself in a garb of religious truth. And it will be still more wonderful if this new Antichrist shall retain power for 1260 years, and through that period make war with the saints and overcome them. It is idle even to fancy such things.

* See "The True Church."

The whole stream of prophecy is opposed. The sacred writings describe a state of things more palpable and distinctive than any given amount of general infidelity.

The writer has, it seems to me, altogether misunderstood the portion of the 13th chapter of the Revelation, from which he quotes. We have seen that he thinks the word *all* includes within it every man not in saving union with Christ, and he believes it is intended to represent Antichrist as worshipped by every, what he calls, *wicked person*. And these are, in his estimation, every human being who has not a saving and personal conscious interest in Christ. He has misunderstood the term earth. He, plainly, believes it to mean this globe. The term earth, as applied in the text, does not mean this globe. Not having understood this term, he has, as I think, on the subject before us, an erring judgment. His good nature, it may be, has misled him, and got the better of his judgment.

The term earth, in the Apocalypse, does not embrace the whole terraqueous globe. It is used to designate a portion of the inhabitants. In the 12th chapter, mention is made of inhabiters of *heaven*, inhabiters of *earth*, and inhabiters of the *sea*. These three classes of inhabiters include all upon the face of this globe. Heaven, earth, and sea, are terms used as figures to convey a distinctive meaning. The whole Apocalypse is a series of allegories. A train of events is conveyed in a series of pictures, which pictures represent allegorically the events they predict. In these pictures are figures to represent persons, or things, or conditions, or circumstances. Thus, "the inhabiters of heaven," are the faithful; "the inhabiters of the earth," are nominal Christians; "the inhabiters of the sea," are Pagans. And when St. John writes "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life," he means all within Christendom described by the term earth. If this be not the meaning of the terms heaven, earth, and sea, who are the inhabiters of the sea?

The term "inhabiters of the earth" is limited to the class of nominal Christians, about whom the action of the drama presented in the vision concerns itself. The vision discloses a state of things which have relation to the reign of the saints predicted by Daniel, and which our Lord came to establish. The "saints of the Most High" compose the Church. The vision concerns itself only with the Church and her opponents. It shows the course she would have to run, the difficulties to surmount, and her ultimate success. Things which interfere not with her course, which do not come into immediate collision with her, are not presented in the Apocalypse. It is always right to bear this in mind, because it marks out a limit to the meaning of expressions.

We must, also, be careful not to confound with a system men who are but loosely attached to it. Though nominally allied, their hearts may be far from it. In our day we find some whose bondage is very slight. In every age there have been some such. A system apparently retains them, but they are not with it. An occasion arises to speak out, and then is seen whether they belong to it or not. Men are influenced in so many ways, and by such varied reasonings, that we are not to conclude, because a man remains within the circle of a system, that he upholds that system. He may be apparently of it, and yet be battling against it. He may think it right, for the sake of unity, not to depart from it, but to try and correct that which he sees amiss in it. Or his light received may not be to the extent which would enforce him to quit a false system, and yet be sufficient to lead him to the Saviour. He may denounce a portion of the system which militates against the great saving truth, and yet retain enough to keep him within its circle. To *worship* the beast and its image is to renounce the worship of Christ. Those who worship Christ cannot worship the beast. Though such may be found beneath the same roof with idolaters, yet are their hearts lifted to their Saviour and they worship Him.

But the Revelation is not concerned so much in these personal and individual interests. It deals with large masses, and presents the chief features of leading systems. Let it be remembered that it concerns itself with events that spread over a period of, at least, 3000 years; commencing from the coming of Christ in the flesh, up to a period when all nations shall be gathered into the one fold; all brought under the influence of the Gospel. The relation seizes the chief features; it portrays the true Church, the antagonist or false Church, or THE ANTICHRIST, and another power which was to interfere materially with the Church, Mahomedanism. It introduces, also, Paganism, showing when this should be wholly overthrown. Judgment sits upon it; and the kingdoms of this world "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." In a relation of this character, comprehending, as it does, a vast expansive range, seizing the principal features, portraying, by figures which stand as emblems of, the chief actors and chief scenes, and embracing a whole train of complex events, can it be expected that minute shades of character will be introduced. In such a work, if we would understand it, we must not take up an isolated passage, and expound it by confining the terms, and limiting their use to their ordinary meaning. Their meaning will be best known by ascertaining the scope and design of the whole.

In the 13th chapter, from which the words "all that dwell upon the earth" are taken, is a description of the antagonist Church. It begins by describing its origin in Paganism, by a figure of a beast that rises out of the sea. The sea here, as I have before shown in "The True Church," represents, as in the writings of Isaiah and David, Paganism. Its course is shown, its antagonism to the saints, or the proper kingdom, or true Church. Its changed form is given from Paganism to the lamb-horned beast. Its identity is disclosed by the portrayal of its marked features, and the declaration of its familiar and usually received name, applicable to it both as Pagan and as Papal Rome—the Latin kingdom. The antagonist of the Church is, first, Pagan

Rome. This is the beast from the sea. Pagan Rome becomes nominally Christian Rome and assumes ecclesiastical and temporal power under the plea of governing for Christ, or the Lamb, the Son of God. This is the lamb-horned beast, having two horns like a lamb, denoting the two powers under the one guise.

In a future chapter, the 17th, is a full development of the beast carrying the woman, the false one, the whore of Scripture, "with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." To this antagonist Church, called "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth," ten kings or kingdoms give their power and strength. It will, indeed, be wonderful if a future age should sink out of light and knowledge into darkness and ignorance, and these ten kingdoms give their strength to Atheistical anarchy. Darkness long brooded over the earth, but when the little book (Rev. x. 2) in the hand of the angel was opened freely to man, and multiplied by the art of printing into numberless copies, darkness was driven away never to return. In the absence of knowledge, Infidelity may stalk abroad unreproved; but in the presence of knowledge, Infidelity will stand abashed. Infidelity may lurk in secret corners, but can never raise her head to govern in kingdoms where light has been shed abroad.

In a relation of things such as the Apocalypse presents, we must gather up the whole before we may declare what is the meaning of a single text. It is not to be expected that a fractional part will be understood if the general tenor of the whole be not obtained. The whole book must be grasped, and then, when the perfect scheme is realised, may we determine the meaning of a given portion. It is fair to conclude that the language employed is intended to be read as limited to that scheme. In this way the terms world, earth, people, &c., are used in every day familiar language.

In exhibiting the chief features of systems, it is not usual to

descend into minute particulars, unless it be an elaborate work. In a condensed book, comprising a large mass of things and events connected with a long range of time, it is not to be expected that more than the leading features would be given. We know that with every system there are things exclusively allied; there are others on the verge shading off into other systems. This is so throughout the range of nature, and of the political and religious condition of men. To every system are lines of demarcation, but these are often so feeble, it is difficult to say to which a given thing belongs. To exhibit a system, the fundamental features are given, and, unless the work be very elaborate, here the description ceases. Such is the Revelation. Minute shades of character are not given.

THE Antichrist is not a system altogether foreign to Christianity, but in intimate connection. It is the False One who usurps the place of the True. She it is with whom the kings of the earth commit fornication. They hold an unholy intercourse with her. They place their affections on the polluted one. The Antichrist does not throw aside religious restraint. She recognizes the Divine will, but *she pollutes* the sanctuary of strength (Dan. xii. 31). She does not attempt its overthrow, as would Atheism, but she desecrates it with abominations. "She is arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. (Rev. xvii. 4). She dresses herself as an angel of light, but conceals beneath her garments the voluptuous and sensual heart. The Antichrist is not one altogether alien, but she is one claiming communion. She says "I sit a queen, and am no widow." She claims to be the wife, and as such "hath glorified herself and lived deliciously." The description of the Antichrist will not in any way apply to Atheistic anarchy. It plainly suits only a system raised into great power, and which power is not a wild ungovernable chaos, but a recognised sovereignty, to which the kings of the earth give

their adhesion. It is, also, a power which includes within it some of God's people. And when I write God's people, I mean his peculiar people, "Come out of her *my people,* that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This quotation is an answer to the question whether all in seeming union with her are of her. Let the whole Revelation be carefully studied with a desire to discover the truth, and it will not be difficult to determine whether THE ANTI-Christ be a recognised system, or it be wild anarchy.

Now with regard to the exclusion from salvation of such men as Pascal, Fenelon, and others, of whom Van Santen, the Jansenist Archbishop of Utrecht, is a type, the quotation "Come out of her my people," leaves not a shadow of doubt that as good Christians they will be saved. These are men whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Though nominally Papists, they do not *worship* the Papacy. Though allied to it, their hearts are not filled with it. The very fact that such men's opinions are unpalatable to Rome, that they are described since the time of Jansenius as Jansenitical, is proof that they do not *worship* Rome. They claim to be Catholics, but they protest, more or less, against Romanism. Such men as these do not make war with the saints; these are not of the ultramontane; these are not Papists; these do not elevate the Pope to the throne of God, so that "He as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God;" these men worship the Lord Christ; they confess Him with their hearts and their tongues, and by such confession they have life with Him. Romanism as a system is condemned, but such men as these are not condemned.

It is of the very highest importance that the Church should not be confounded with a counterfeit. There are certain marks of her members which are indubitable. St. John, in his first epistle, has laid them down very clearly, so that no mistake need be made; and in the fourth chapter he thus warneth: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because

many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

The confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is the mark whereby His followers are known. They rely upon this, His coming in the flesh as their all-sufficient Saviour. Now, in past ages, and yet in the present age, this doctrine is heterodox to Rome. In past ages they persecuted to the death all who so confessed Christ. They interposed other deities, other means of salvation, furnished other hopes of salvation, Mother Church was, and is put forth as the Saviour. If the spirit confess, not the lips only, but the spirit, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, be sure there will be a saving grace. If the efficacy of the Saviour's atonement be relied on, and it will be if the spirit confess, then does such confession insure salvation. There will be union with Christ. Every defilement is washed away in the blood of His atonement, and the cleansed becomes a member of His body—the Church. To all such, the righteousness of Christ is imputed. They abide in Him, and "whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." By such purity, admission is gained into the holy city, the new Jerusalem, the Church, the Lamb's wife.

All such form the Church. These are antagonistic to the Papacy. Some more, some less, some have been driven into open rebellion, some have continued nominally connected. But none have ever persecuted the saints; or, at least, without deep

after repentance. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The whole of the latter portion of St. John's epistle is filled with the marks of a spirit-belief in Christ, and love is essentially one of them. This spirit-belief may have existed without open rupture with Rome. Persecution it was that often made open separatists. Luther, after he became a true disciple of Christ, but for persecution would probably have remained in communion with the Church of Rome. Persecution, therefore, though sinful, has been made an instrument of good. Martyrs have been the seed of the Church. To persecute, however, betrayed the spirit; "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Every persecutor showed himself to be of the Evil One. And unless repentance came before too late, such "shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without measure into the cup of His indignation."

It will be understood by what I have written, that my opinion is, that the Church is composed of the true disciples of Christ, though they may, some of them, bear the external mark of adhesion to a false system. The two witnesses mentioned in the 11th chapter describe them. These are the antagonists to those "in the outer court of the temple." And I believe they are not those alone in open rebellion to Rome, of whom there have been always some in every age, either Paulicians, or Albigenses, or Lollards, or Huguenots, or Waldenses, or Protestants; but they are the whole faithful in every age, of whom some are Jansenists. That they are called two witnesses is not to limit the body to two classes, but to denote their sufficiency. The Hebrew laws required two witnesses to substantiate a testimony. And the two witnesses denote their sufficiency for Christ, as a testimony for Him before men, and to prove that He forgets not his promise, that "the gates of hell should never prevail against His Church."

Many out of every denominational Church will be saved.

Wherever there is heart-belief in Christ, there, there will be life in Christ. However moved by an erring judgment in other respects, or constrained by the variety of influences exerted over us, yet where this heart-belief is there is union. And our Lord said, "He that hath me hath life." And St. John writes, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life."

If we turn our eyes back upon the gloomy state of Christendom in some of the past ages, we shall see many who worshipped the beast, and few who worshipped the Son of Man. The efficacy of His atonement was all but lost to the world. His faithful ones, the Church, were few. In the language of the Apocalypse the woman, the Church, fled into the wilderness. There were few faithful ones, either of those driven out from, or of those retained within, the pale of Rome. But all who knew Christ savingly, that is, believed on Him so that the spirit confessed Him, put their trust in Him. All others put their trust in the priest, or in the Virgin Mary, or in deified saints, or in purchased masses. Those who put their trust in Him were of His Church, and undoubtedly saved, let them have been called what they may.

The opinion promulgated that THE ANTICHRIST has yet to appear, is opposed to the whole prophetical writings. Such an opinion will not bear the smallest scrutiny. The time having arrived when knowledge has increased, and men run too and fro, and they circulate the truth, and the promise of a millennial future being now not very distant, preclude the reign of the Antichrist for a lengthened future period. I do not say that infidelity may not rise its hideous head for a short time. I think it probable that the change out of Romanism, from the great ignorance among Romanists of religious truth, may lead, in some countries, to infidelity; and that to rid themselves of an incubus, great excesses may be committed. A festering sore needs sometimes to be removed by sharp excision.

Having written thus much of those who, in the Christian

economy, will be saved, I am induced to support a further opinion I have advanced* of those who will be saved. Not only do the Scriptures assure the salvation of all in spiritual union with Christ, but they, also, assure the salvation of the virtuous heathen. This declaration, I know, will not meet with the assent of divines; nevertheless, it appears to me undoubtedly true.

Some texts of Scripture appear opposed to this truth. Such as "Except ye abide in me ye have no life in you." "He that hath not the Son hath not life." As I have said before, the sacred Scriptures must always be read as a whole. It is no use to take solitary passages in hopes to deduce from them the whole truth. The whole is conveyed often in antithetical propositions, and we are to judge of the meaning of a passage by its relation to the context, and the general and governing object. For instance, we are told "to take no thought of the morrow," and again we are told "to be diligent in business." These two rules appear opposed, nevertheless, we know they are not. Without both, probably, either alone would lead to a false conclusion. Again, our Lord declared "I and my father are one," but he also declared "my Father is greater than I." In the one our Lord asserted His divinity, and as such his co-equality; in the other declaration he asserted His humanity, and in this His inferiority, being in His humanity the faithful servant of God, and great high priest of His people.

Now of the declaration "he that hath not the Son hath not life," it means those have not life who reject the Son. St. John is teaching a knowledge of the true spirit in men, and he is declaring that every one that hath this spirit will confess the Son, and he that hath not the true spirit will not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. And he, therefore, declares, that all who do not so confess have no life in them. He is here alluding to all who have heard of Christ, all to whom He has been preached. He is telling the Church to "believe not every spirit,

* In the "True Church."

but to try the spirits whether they are of God;" and he means the spirits who claim to be of God. All who so claim, and yet deny that Christ or God is come in the flesh, have no life in them. This text, and others of like character, are not, then, conclusive against ignorant unbelievers. They are conclusive against wilful unbelievers.

All to whom the Gospel has not been preached do not stand in the same relation to God as they do to whom it has been preached. Our Lord says, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin."

This teaching is applied in Acts xvii., as I have shown in the "True Church." In this chapter is the relation of St. Paul preaching to the men of Athens, to whom he taught the God that made the world, whereas before they dedicated their altar to, and worshipped, the Unknown God. He told them that they ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device; and he says "The times of this ignorance God *winked at;* but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." He went on to teach them of the law of righteousness, and gave them to understand that though God winked at their former ignorance, they would now be judged by the law propounded to them.

St. Paul to the Romans in a similar manner excuses ignorance. He is teaching them that there is no distinction of men with God, and he says that the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And he adds, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"

It is not to be expected, in a book expressly written to teach the knowledge of God, that many exculpatory passages for the heathen would be met with. But God, who is rich in mercy to all His creatures, has not left Himself without witness that He will not unjustly condemn. It is intended that the law of righteousness shall be taught to all, and that the Gospel shall speed over

the whole earth with its life-breathing influence, and its rejection, when made known, is the denial of our Lord, so that the spirits of men do not confess Him, and these will be tried by the law of righteousness, which will condemn them; but those who have never heard the Gospel, those to whom the law of righteousness is altogether unknown, will be tried by other laws; they will be tried out of the books from whose precepts, if received by them as holy, they have regulated their lives (Rev. xx. 12).*

Our Lord, in the Gospels, recognised this exemption from sin in the absence of wilful intention. To err in ignorance does not meet with condemnation. He stated that He came into the world that they which see not might see. And when the Pharisees said unto Him, are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, "*If ye were blind, ye should have no sin*: but now ye say, we see; therefore, your sin remaineth" (John ix. 40, 41). This doctrine is upheld in other language by our Lord, He said, "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." St. James, in his epistle, teaches this truth, He writes, "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

In my Father's house are many mansions. In some of these will the good of every class find habitations. It is the vile of every class, who have no feelings attuned to the great Spirit above, who will find themselves where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; where the worm never dieth. They will look and behold the just in harmonious union with their God, and this, to them, will be a source of continual condemnation.

To return to the main subject of this paper. If the passage in the Revelation, which the writer has adduced for his opinion

* I have maintained in the "True Church" that the scene depicted in the Apocalypse, and usually received as a scene of the future judgment day, has relation wholly to Paganism.

upon THE ANTICHRIST, be carefully examined with its context, it will be seen that the term earth is limited to the meaning I have shewn, and that the whole chapter relates to a power accurately described, and which description will not apply to universal anarchy, or universal rejection of Christ, whether from ignorance or wilfulness. And it is also worthy of note, that the passage itself seems to refer to a rejecting class, an opposing class. It says, "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb *slain from the foundation of the world*" (Rev. xiii. 8).

What are we to understand by the words "slain from the foundation of the world?" Do they not imply, that the same opposing principle which crucified our Lord began to operate from the foundation of the world, and issues still in the worship of the beast? This principle operates alike at all times; it works with the instructed, not with the ignorant. "He came to His own, and His own received him not."

Is the term "world" to be limited to mean the things about which the Apocalypse is concerned, and to bear date from the crucifixion of our Lord? I think not. The declaration "slain from the foundation of the world," intimates an early opposing principle; that from the very foundation of the world there have been rebellious spirits; and that the same opposing principle is still actively at work. It is still slaying the Lord of glory. To crucify Him afresh is to deny Him. And has not this been the case throughout the career of the Papacy. To confess Jesus was, in past times, to be a martyr. Do not Papists now put the Lord to an open shame? They profess Him with their lips, but they have no heart-belief in Him. Have they not committed all sorts of abominations in His name? Do they not set up other names whereby they may be saved? Do they not lift up the Pope to an equality? Nay, not alone to an equality, but above Him. In past ages to accept the Pope and to deny Christ was orthodox, but to accept Christ and to deny the Pope

was heterodox. What the Pope decrees, though it be opposed to Scripture, is to be received. Is he not styled by Papists the centre of spiritual life? Do they not reverence images? God says, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath." Popery says, "Make images of Christ, of the Virgin Mary, of departed saints." God says, "Thou shalt not bow down to them." Popery says, "Thou shalt bow down to them." How it is possible for men instructed in early life in God's truths to gulp down such a declaration as converts to Popery have to make is astonishing.* Some of these are men of honest intentions, and yet, by a vicious teaching are led into false views, and positively accept a standard for truth opposed to God's truth.

The latter part of the 13th chapter of Revelation delineates a practice that has, and still obtains that of marking the right hand or the forehead of the adherents to Popery. Every member observes a devout practice to mark themselves, but in addition the rich and the poor receive a mark on their forehead. On Ash-Wednesday they are signed on the forehead with ashes in the sign of a cross.† All who do not bear, either in their right hand or on the forehead, the mark of the beast, are not permitted to buy or sell the spiritual merchandise of Mother Church. Without the mark they are not in communion (Rev. xiii. 17). Only these in communion buy or sell indulgences or masses for the dead.

In past ages, to deny the Papacy, was to be devoted to destruction. Those who would not fall down and worship the image of the beast, that is, the second or lamb-horned beast, the image of

* I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, of the Mother of God, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that *due honour and veneration* ought to be given them."—*Converts' Declaration.*

† "The ceremony of applying ashes, in the form of a cross, to the heads of the faithful on this day, Ash-Wednesday, is a relick of the ancient discipline of the Church."—*The Roman Missal.*

the beast from the sea, were killed. Not to do so in the present day subjects the offender to incarceration, where Popery dares exercise such a power. In this how well fulfilled has been the fifteenth verse of the chapter under consideration.

If it had been the intention of our Lord to build His Church, as alleged by Papists, upon Peter, how comes it that the Apostles did not act upon the intention? We do not find that Peter had a pre-eminence over them. Paul says, "he withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed (Gal. ii. 11). If it had been the intention of our Lord to have established a theocracy, would He not have made Peter in the Apostles' time a chief among them? He is called by Papists chief of the Apostles, but in no way was he recognised as chief by the Apostles. Peter, we are told, was the Apostle of the circumcision. He was taught in a dream that the Gentiles were to be received, and that he was to call nothing unclean, but he was not the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles, Peter the Apostle to the Jews (Gal. ii. 8). How comes it, then, that a Gentile Church claims Peter for their head?

Where is the evidence that Peter presided over the infant Church of Rome. In Galatians i. 18, Paul writes, "After three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." We know from these words that Peter did reside at Jerusalem. If it had been determined by our Lord to have built His Church after the manner set up by the Papists, should we not have had some direct testimony to so all-important a point as Peter's alleged Roman bishopric? And would there not, also, have been a further testimony to his universal superintendance? How comes it that this claim to universal rule, supposing it to have been possessed, lay dormant in the bishopric of Rome until 606, when claim was made to it by the then Bishop of Rome, and at that time disputed by the Bishop of Constantinople? How comes it that this claimed power was not established until the eighth century?

Every part of the Divine Word is opposed to the system Popery has established; and the right meaning to be assigned to the promise to Peter is, probably, that which I have assigned. The promise, or promises, were not alone to Peter, but to the Church.*

The whole scheme of Popery is based upon false pretensions. It is a clergy Church, a sacramental Church, a mediating Church, the few interposing for the many; whereas the Church of Christ is spiritually united to Christ, all having access to Him as members of His body, and all as such kings and priests unto God. In the Church of Christ is universal priesthood (Rev. i. 5).†

THE ANTICHRIST is the Papacy. The Antichrist is, however, not confined to the Papacy; but all having relation to the principles of the Papacy form parts of the body called THE ANTICHRIST. It is essentially a system which presents a false body to represent a true body. Any national Church claiming to be a branch of the Church, and claiming exclusive privileges for some of its members based upon such a claim, is THE ANTICHRIST. The false body is, especially, what has been termed, and very expressively and very properly termed, the clergy Church. The clergy Church propounds a system based avowedly upon righteous laws, and which shall give to a class power and pre-eminence. Christianity is entirely at variance with any such system. And this it is my intention to go on to show. And the conclusion to which we shall be brought, without any lingering doubt being left about it, is that the clergy Church is THE ANTICHRIST, or Whore of Scripture—the False One sitting in the seat of the True. And, moreover, we shall be brought to a further conclusion, that it is high time that she should be cast from her assumed lofty position, and give place before the world's eye to the beloved and faithful one, the Zion of our Lord.

The prophecies point most decisively to this result; and the day

* See "True Church." † Ibid.

is not distant when the false state of things will be overthrown, and give place to the true. Not only the Revelation declares it, but Ezekiel, and Isaiah, and Daniel, and Micah; indeed, I know not a prophet who does not proclaim it. The "house of Jacob *called* by the name of Israel," and who *call themselves* of the holy city, and *stay themselves* upon the God of Israel," and who proclaim *themselves* to be the espoused of God, and who think as such they shall be "a lady for ever," shall shortly "be silent and get into darkness, for she shall no more be called, "the lady of kingdoms" (Isa. xlvii. and xlviii.). In the words of Ezekiel, the shepherds who have fed themselves, and fed not the flock, shall cease from feeding, "Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; thus saith the Lord God; behold I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them" (Ezek. xxxiv).

Under the figure of the "Virgin, daughter of Babylon," Isaiah prophecies the destruction of the False One, the polluted, the harlot of Scripture. She is styled the "Virgin daughter." She claims to be married, but God says in the figurative language of Scripture, "I will not meet *thee* as a man;" she is not married, and is, therefore, styled a "virgin daughter." The ancient Babylon furnishes imagery for much that was to come after. The term is used throughout the prophecies, and thus the mother of harlots is termed in the Revelation "Babylon the Great." As the term "Maid of Jerusalem" denotes the second or Christian dispensation and true Church,* so the term "Daughter of Babylon" denotes the second Babylon, or the antagonist of the Christian Church, as the first Babylon was the antagonist of the first or Hebrew Church.

Now the present antagonist, as is clearly shown by the Revelation, is Papal Rome. But Papal Rome is not the whole

* See "True Church."

embodiment; every off-shoot from Rome, or every Church based upon the principle that a temporal, national, or denominational Church is a branch of the Church, partakes of the character of the False One. In the nature of things it is impossible for a carnal, worldly, sensual, fleshly body to represent a spiritual body, and they do wickedly who claim on behalf of any such body such a position. Antichrist is not a body foreign to God's Word and denying its power, but it is a body instructed, and whose "wisdom and knowledge hath perverted" her, and she says in her "heart, *I am*, and none else beside me" (Isa. xlvii. 10).

Antichrist is again a body that traffics in spiritual things. She has her merchants who deal in spiritual things, and buy and sell spiritual wares (Isa. xlvii. 15.), (Rev. xiii. 17). She is not, therefore, a body foreign to Christianity, but one allied thereto. Her people bear God's name and are called His people, and God thus addresses some of them, "Come out of her *my* people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

The Scriptures everywhere recognise a body in spiritual union with Christ, and called "His Church," and "the Church." This is Christ's body—His Church. Antichrist is that system based upon the falsehood, that a fleshly body represents this spiritual body. Let every *Churchman* who has hitherto upheld the false state of things, reflect deeply upon the Scripture statements, and let him pause before he again utters the faithless lie. Churches do not as a whole make up the Church. Neither does one represent the Church; nor is any one a branch of, or part of the Church. Churches are but as instruments and means, whereby God is pleased to assist in building up the Church. Not a single Church is in spiritual union with Christ; each gives out members to the Church, but not one can claim to be as a whole without evil, and God's purity is not allied to evil. Churches are none of them in intimate union as members of His body, and it bespeaks a wicked and perverted mind, and ignorance of spiritual things

in any man, who claims for a Church, of which he is a member, this high position. He is proclaiming himself a member of the polluted one, the mother of harlots, the False One of Scripture—THE ANTICHRIST, usurping the place of the True—the Christ,* or Christian body, God's faithful people on earth.

Rome, as the centre of the false ecclesiastical system, is styled "*the Holy City.*" Holy indeed! Ask the gloomy walls of the Inquisition if upon them is inscribed "Holiness to the Lord!" Ask the bloody inquisitors if they regulate their decisions by just and merciful laws! Ask the magnate palatial residence of Rome's bishop, the Vatican, if angels of light tread with holy steps the glittering halls! Ask the crafty priesthood who fill every avenue of the city, whether they let "the oppressed go free, and loose the heavy burdens." Rome, amid all its splendours, is filled with oppression, with crime, with pollution. For such to claim to be "the Holy City!" Rome presents indeed a melancholy sight, and one could weep tears of bitterness over the unhallowed claim of the incestuous city.

She presents not alone a melancholy sight. She provokes to ironical laughter. While bitterness and sorrow fill the heart at Rome's sinful and polluted state, her claims to holiness and to relationship with the pure and holy God excite the deepest scorn and irony. It is indeed a pitiful sight to behold the False One tricked out in all the finery of whoredom, and asking and looking for God's love. With crimson face and false charms, seated upon the seven-hilled city, and exclaiming, "I sit a queen, and am no widow" (Rev. xviii. 7), "*I am,* and none else beside me" (Isa. xlvii. 10), she presents so pitiful a sight, one can scarcely lift the heart out of its depression to indulge in irony. But is not the picture which Rome presents a bloated caricature of "the Holy

* Ephes. i. 22, 23. "The Church *which is His body*, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Ephes. v. 30. "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

City?" Think of the chastened character of the Faithful One, dressed in garb of purest white, with graceful mien, and eyes uplifted heavenward, with faith and peace imprinted on the brow, she walks hand in hand with the Son of man, each in confiding love. Then think of the Polluted One, dressed in scarlet robes, and with flaunting gait, and eyes of fire, and haughty pride upon her brow, and cheeks vermilion, seeking to please and attract each passer by, and offering to the kings of the earth her meretricious charms.

To such an one the God of heaven allied!!! For ever be the unworthy thought cast far away! To her dupes and to her lovers let the word of caution be addressed. Look at the picture Christ has given of "the Holy City," into which "nothing entereth that defileth;" and then cast the eye upon the counterfeit, which is "full of names of blasphemy," and in which sits "the woman arrayed in purple aud scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations of her fornication: and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

God, in Christ, came upon earth and established "a holy city," the Church, pure and undefiled, and impregnable—a spiritual city. In this city the denizens worship and adore God. His will is their will. Their chief desire is to do His will. They seek to be approved of Him. They submit in all things to His guidance. They desire His love. They present no service as meriting reward, but accept God's assured love as a free unconditional gift. They live alone in His love. Come good, come ill, in this chequered scene below, they ask but His love; they know that He will direct all things for their good. This is but a passing scene; and His love will make it bright and pleasing, though sorrow touch the heart. They know they have in Him eternal life; and though the heart of flesh may feel the pangs to which the human heart is subject, and

here may press the spirit down, yet will the spirit, soon freed from its earthly load, wing upward in its heavenward flight, and dwell, through countless ages, amid adoring cherubim and seraphim. In God's city is pure, unalloyed love—love to God and love to man; and this sheds around a halo that brightens every path. With this love shed abroad in the heart, it is impossible for the evil passions to hold a sway; the bright sunshine of God's holy Spirit within must drive them all away. In hearts thus moulded by, and with spirits thus attuned to God, God has established His holy city here on earth, and the city is known as "The Lord is there"* (Ezek. xlviii. 35); and on every heart is inscribed "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD"† (Zech. xiv. 20). Not that holiness which leads to the repeating of a given number of Ave Marias or Pater Nosters, or to the wearing of sackcloth, and to the mortifying of the flesh; but that holiness begotten of a pure, unalloyed love to God—a love that gives all the affections to Him, and which casteth out fear (1 John iv. 18). Fear hath torment, but love hath peace. Fear is begotten of doubt and unbelief, and hath for its centre, self. Love is engendered of confiding trust; love seeketh not her own, but delighteth to honour, and hath for its centre, God.

* The name of the city "The Lord is there," is the declaration of Ezekiel; and we are arrived at the appointed period foretold by the Prophet when the city should be known by that name.—See True Church, p. 483.

† All the prophets declare a great change from a state of darkness and estrangement from God to one of light and knowledge, and a walking with God. This change occasions the overthrow of the Antichrist, and is so prophesied by Zechariah; and he concludes his predictions, employing these words in the two last verses of his book.

The words, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, in this prophet, have reference to the now approaching period, and what is called the millennial reign of Christ. But they have also a reference to a distant future, when every Pagan land becomes Christian.

I think it right, to prevent misapprehension, to state, that I believe it a mistake to suppose, as some do, that during the millennial period, Paganism will have entirely ceased.—See True Church, millennial period.

Satan established a *holy* city! impure, defiled, and assailable. God, who doth let, will let until that "Wicked one," the impersonation of wickedness, be revealed. He has been, and is being revealed, and successive blows are being dealt for his destruction. "The Lord shall consume him with the spirit of His mouth, and with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all *deceivableness* of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. ii. 8—10). In this city every stratagem, with deceivableness, is put into use, which shall make the sham look like the reality—the false like the true. God is honoured in word, and, were it not for deeds, the circulating coin would look like gold. But it is base counterfeit, and God, because He is thus dishonored, sends among the citizens "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 11). Satan, or, as Mr. Thom would express it, man's enmity to God, has set up a scheme which shall work in God's name all unrighteousness. In the city which this scheme has established, is furious hate and every evil passion. If God be honoured and the Pope abased, the Inquisition smothers in its dark cells the saintly words. If Christ be preached, and the passing host or consecrated wafer of Mother Church be disregarded, the bayonets of hired soldiers teach a painful lesson. If Christ be offered as an all-sufficient Atonement, men pass idly on; but if the Pope declare a pardon, men fall down and worship him. If God's free gift of grace and love be proffered, they receive no acceptance; but if priestly masses be sold, they meet with willing purchasers. In this city the Pope "is there," and its holiness consists in never-ending services by countless priests in gorgeous robes. In this city is little love, but much hate and much dread; and herein the priests make no small market of this state of things. The "perfect love which casteth out fear" is not known here. Dread of ill-deserving is the predominant feeling,

and purgatory, begotten of priestcraft, stands in dread array before delinquents.

Look at this picture, and look at that, and say which of the two really presents a holy, and "the holy city."

God is not untrue to Himself, and cannot be the author of both. The sham and the real cannot both proceed from His hands. The sham is a device of guilty men, wrought out with all deceivableness for their own wicked purposes. Its leading principle is based in priestcraft—the very opposite of Christianity. Priestcraft works for this world, and whose god is the belly. Christianity works for another world, and lifts man to communion with the God eternal. Priestcraft is exhibited in all its enormity in the counterfeit city, but it does not display itself here only. It is found in the outskirts as well. It is that principle, be it found where it may, that preaches self as a medium to salvation, and makes a market thereby. God's offer of salvation through Christ is free, unconditional, and asks only for acceptance. This is the glad tidings—the good news—the Gospel. Priestcraft says, you cannot obtain salvation but by and through me. And *impudent* priestcraft goes farther, and says, your sins will sink you many ages in the sufferings of purgatory, unless you accept my help to release you therefrom. And impudent priestcraft is so generous, that while it is paid it will work; and for the relief of distressed souls it will go through many antics while the golden fund lasts. Indulgences and masses for the repose of the dead have been capital bankers to honour the drafts of priestcraft. How long will men continue to be so besotted and befooled by sacerdotal lies? When will men throw off the galling yoke of priestly tyranny?

Priestcraft is the antipodes of Christianity. Christ hath made us free. Priestcraft chains men down. Priestcraft, working in the name of Christ, is the ANTICHRIST of Scripture.

The Antichrist is not a something to be hereafter, but a present, living existence. It is the embodiment of a priestly

principle which operated against Christianity from its origin. St. Paul writes, "the mystery of iniquity doth already work," and he declared that it will work until "that Wicked be revealed." From the very first, the principle began to operate, and it is against this that St. Paul argues in writing to the Corinthian Church. There was already contention with regard to the effect of water-baptism. Some of the baptized said they were of Paul; some of Apollos; some of Cephas; some of Christ. They began to dispute about the effect of water-baptism from the hands of one or other of the disciples. St. Paul enquiringly asks, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" And, he adds, "I thank God I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius." Men began already to look to the hands that administered the rite rather than to the God to whom that rite introduced them. They began already to enthrone man and to dethrone Christ. This principle of evil worked until it established "that Wicked," the Man of Sin, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." The principle evinced itself at first, and it is repeatedly alluded to by the holy penmen. Its progression, and its full embodiment, are unfolded in the Revelation.

If we consider the state of the world at the period when Christianity was introduced, we shall not be surprised that a priestly principle should find admission. Superstition pervaded the whole mass, not excluding the Jews, and priestly influence everywhere obtained. In such an age, when the mass of men were utterly ignorant about spiritual things, it is not to be wondered at that Christianity should have run into a false ecclesiastical form. When men were passing out of heathenism, and a ceremonial law, into a higher, and purer, and more spiritual form of worship, it is not surprising that they should carry with them many old notions. It would have been infinitely surprising, and the effect

of miracle, if they had not. God in Christ worked miracles to evidence His presence when on earth, but this was an unusual, not the usual mode of His operations. All things in nature move by an order of progression, and humanity, as part of nature, is not permitted to depart therefrom. The priestly principle having long existed, though foreign to Christianity, found admission thereto. That it can continue therein is an utter impossibility. Priestly tyranny may for a little time longer continue to chain down humanity, but rise it must, in spite of the fearful opposition of man's enmity to God. Now that, by the will of God, knowledge has increased; facilities of intercourse are afforded; the press teeming with the unfolding of previously hidden truths; God's holy word multiplied into numberless copies, and distributed over the earth in nearly every language: it is impossible that the Antichrist, the Harlot, the False One, the Polluted, should much longer shroud herself under some of the habiliments of the beloved Zion. As many now do, so shortly will all men, in spite of the great efforts now making to prevent such a consummation, discover that the Antichrist is not a body foreign to Christianity, but the false ecclesiastical system which propounds a scheme of priestly tyranny that exalts Priestcraft and dishonours God.

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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

(No. II.)

THE CHURCH ON EARTH,

NOT

A BODY HAVING AN ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANISATION,

BUT

COMPOSED OF MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY IN SPIRITUAL UNION.

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THE CHURCH ON EARTH,

&c. &c.

In the preceding number I have attempted to establish that the Antichrist is not a something to be hereafter, but is a present reality; that it is not a something foreign to christianity, but is a system linked in intimate connection therewith; that it is, in truth, a false body representing itself to be, and claiming privileges belonging to, a true body. In Scripture language, it is the harlot claiming the position of the lawful bride.

Mr. Thom, in his book upon man's enmity to God, points out the last great exhibition of human enmity to consist in the non-acceptance of God's free gift of salvation and of eternal life in Christ, and in setting up schemes and proposing human means for the attainment thereof. In this opinion I quite concur. This principle of self-justification, in every varied and modified form, especially belongs to the state of things as they exist under the false ecclesiastical system. The whole is opposed to the Gospel scheme. The principle has been derived from notions pre-existing to christianity, and have descended to the present generation, but forms no part of the Gospel. Of this I think we shall be satisfied as we proceed.

I am at present to show that the Church on earth is not a body having an ecclesiastical organisation, but is composed of members of Christ's body in spiritual union, irrespective of a clergy order.

Let me once for all state, that the arguments I shall use will

be derived almost exclusively from the Sacred Scriptures. I do not think it needful to prove the Divine inspiration of the Sacred Writings. I am not arguing with men who cast aside the Scriptures in part, or as a whole. I am arguing with men who receive them as being derived from God, and who act upon them, and claim their whole position from them. I scarcely address myself to a school of the present day which teaches the advancement of mankind upon purely philosophical principles, and who think they see in the Scriptures evident marks of weakness, and imperfections, and discrepancies, which belong not to Deity. To such I would say, be not hasty to condemn that which you do not understand. It is not because you grope about in darkness that there is not light, but the spiritual vision is so feeble it cannot see the light. Be sure that when a stream of men have been made successively to proclaim a series of prophetical visions, which have looked into and marked out much of the world's past course, and many of which visions still look into and mark out much of the world's future course, that no other than the Eternal mind could be directing the several writers minds. The philosophical natural mind may find some things that offend its enlarged notions, but let it think it just possible that a book which has been intended for every age, whether ignorant or comparatively learned, may just be the most suitable that could be possibly framed. Philosophers need not to be told that a very false conclusion may easily be arrived at by the absence of an apparently inconsequential reason. If man were omniscient, and, while knowing all things, had the capacity to grasp them at one time, then may he conclude that his judgment would be unerring. The God who has permitted declarations of natural things suitable to past ignorance, is the same God who declared, through the man Daniel, that "knowledge should increase." God knew how the world and all things therein were framed, but He did not think it proper to shock the minds of all *bygone philosophers* by declarations of things contrary to the evidence of their senses. They

saw, as they thought, that the earth was flat, and He did not think it needful to tell them, contrary to the evidence of their sight, that the earth is round. The Scriptures were written, not to teach the great truths of nature, but they were written to teach, in every age, a knowledge of the God of nature, to bring man into communion with Him. And so of the devils cast out from the afflicted by our Lord, the current opinions, when every mountain and every valley were peopled with invisible life, were not to be shocked by declarations fitted for more advanced knowledge. The purposes of God were to be fulfilled, and who shall declare the means unsuitable? In mercy to weak man God addressed his ignorance, and shall God be cavilled at for this? He had many things to say, but men were incapable of receiving them (John xvi. 12). Are the declarations with regard to the devils cast out positively untrue? Are we so thoroughly acquainted with spiritual existences as to determine the limits of their operations? Shall we cast aside the overwhelming testimony in favour of God's handiwork in every page, because a few things jar upon our intellectual conceits? God forbid! God forbid that we should refuse to listen to His voice, because in some matters He addresses us as little children, instead of, as we conceive of ourselves, great tall men.

In order to elucidate the great truth for which I contend, it will be needful to examine the Scripture declarations with regard to the Church. We must make our minds familiar with all her features, so that a counterfeit may readily be distinguished. It is in this way only that no cheat may be passed upon us. If we do not know what belongs to her, how shall we know what does not belong to her. If we content ourselves with only a sidelong glance, we may easily have another than the true foisted upon us. My labours will serve but very little purpose unless my readers will be content, nay anxious, to scan carefully every feature.

There are not two Churches in union with Christ, and divines do not present two Churches for the consideration of their

auditors. They are too wise for this. Though they do not present two Churches, they present two conditions of the one Church, and to which conditions they apply the terms militant and triumphant. The way in which the term militant is employed I shall show hereafter is wholly a mistake. The Church is in one sense militant, but in the sense in which they employ the term she is not militant. The Church is ever triumphant, on earth as in heaven. The gates of hell have never, and shall never prevail against her.

The two conditions in which divines represent the Church, have led, though not in words, yet in fact, to the creation of another and a rival Church. Divines recognise the Church in union with Christ under the term mystical; but besides this Church they say there is a Church ecclesiastical founded by our Lord, and which is only another condition of the one Church, and which they call militant. The mystical Church, which some divines call the universal Church, they admit is composed of all the elect and chosen of God, both they who are here and they who are in heaven. The militant Church, or Church ecclesiastical, they say is a condition of the Church, with an ecclesiastical polity, and with large promises and gifts, founded by our Lord.

About the Church mystical we are agreed; about the Church ecclesiastical we are not agreed—*Churches* ecclesiastical there are, but *the Church* ecclesiastical there is not. I declare that the Church in union with Christ is one and indivisible; that it is composed of members in heaven, and members here in the flesh; that the members here in the flesh have large promises made them, and large gifts bestowed upon them. It will be suggested by divines, Oh, he is meaning what we mean by the Church mystical. True, I mean the Church mystical, but I mean also the Church in its living reality on earth. To this Church every promise applies, and to no other; and this Church is perfectly independent of any ecclesiastical government.

Before we look into the several features of the Church, it

will be well to consider the present general aspect of nominal Christianity.

Spread over nearly the whole face of the globe are men styled Christians. These exist in separate and independent bodies. Some in large, others in smaller communities. Some in full possession of a whole country, others mingled with, and within, Pagan and Mohammedan nations. The Gospel has spread from Judea to the outermost bounds of the earth. The little stone has become a mountain, and is enlarging until it shall fill the whole earth. This Christian people, composed now of some out of every land, exist as they did in the first ages of Christianity, in communities, or separate Christian bodies, and which are called Churches. Among these bodies varied opinions obtain upon the subject of the Church. Nearly all admit there is the Church mystical, the elect of God. Many concur in confounding with the Church mystical a Church ecclesiastical, and claiming for the latter that which belongs only to the former. These Churches believe themselves to be branches of that which is emphatically styled *the Church*, and thus claim privileges which belong to the Church. One leviathan corporation claims to be the Church. This I have shown is the polluted one of Scripture, the false one usurping the place of the true. The wickedness of this usurpation is apparent. But there are some that do not go the whole length of claiming to be the Church, and yet retain enough of the great falsehood as to lead them to style themselves branches of the Church; and by this appropriation claim to themselves privileges which do not belong to them as ecclesiastically-founded corporations. They may have members to whom, individually, the promises apply, but to them, as whole bodies, the promises do not apply.

I have to request that my reader will dismiss for a time that he or she is a member of an individual Church. Let it be considered that the subject we have in hand addresses itself to all; not to an isolated member of a Church, or concerns itself with the temporal

interests of any one Church. It embraces christianity as a whole. It contemplates the great family of man. It does not present itself as bearing upon this or that community. Let the Church of England man remember that there are some 120 or 130 millions of Romanists. Let the Romanist remember there are some the like, or it may be a lesser, number of Protestants. And let Romanists and Protestants remember that there is as numerous a body as either of the Greek or Eastern Church.

The book which I have already published upon the Church, has for its primary object to show that the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is intended to represent the Church on earth, as well as in heaven. In dealing with the subject anew, it is probable that many repetitions will be found. This is almost a certain consequence of travelling over much of the same ground, and is to some extent unavoidable.

The Church on earth, for which the Holy City is a figure, and is the scripture expression thereof, has intimate spiritual union with Christ, and purity by reason of that union. True, say some, this is the Church mystical, but there is beside this another Church, a visible body set up, composed of clergy and laity, including good and bad, in which is established an ecclesiastical polity from the time of the Apostles, and that to this Church the promises belong. This Church, to distinguish it from the mystical, divines term the Church militant.

With this latter opinion we are at issue. We declare that there was no such body established based upon ecclesiastical polity. And that to any such body as may now exist, claiming to be thus established, the promises of our Lord do not apply. We declare that in the Apostolic times there were several bodies formed called churches, but that these were not in the aggregate the Church, or each Church a branch of the Church. The Church, composed of the elect and faithful out of these, was then established, and that this is the origin and foundation of the Church now existing on earth, and to which alone the promises apply. This Church then

was, and now is, and shall continue to be, in spiritual union with Christ.

The Church is composed of members in spiritual union with Christ. Some are gone, no longer visible to human eye, and are in heaven in union; some are here, and mingle in the pursuits of life, and are on earth in union. These unitedly are *the* Church. Churches are composed of persons in nominal union with Christ; they bear Christ's name, and are held together in communities or churches by some recognised and admitted laws.

The body on earth, in spiritual union with Christ, is not now a palpable visible corporate body. The members are but doubtfully visible individually. Nevertheless, they are not easily mistaken. "By their fruits ye shall know them." There are some whose words and actions testify of them unmistakeably. In the Apostolic age there was a visible united body. This body was composed of faithful believers, chosen out of the world, holding a common sentiment, and animated by one spirit. Of this body the Apostles were chief, and with these were many faithful brethren, the elect of God. This body was in spiritual union with Christ and called the Church.

If, say some, the visible corporate bodies called Churches did not form, in the aggregate, the Church, in what manner did our Lord perform His promise, that the gates of hell should never prevail, and that He would be with His Church "always to the end of the world?" Had these no further meaning than that He would be present with His elect and chosen people? No; in the sense of being protectingly and intimately present, most certainly not. With the Churches he often was not present; with this, His Church, He has been always present. Though not now a palpable visible corporation, yet has a stream of men existed from the Apostles downward in union with Christ. The Church on earth has been ever maintained. There has not been an age in which some have not testified to the truth, in which some have not had a saving-heart-belief in Christ. Even through the darkest periods, when the world was sunk in darkest gloom, when idolatry,

and fanaticism, and superstition, stalked hand in hand over the earth, yet then did some beckoned one give out the note of praise to a loved Redeemer. Though Satan ruled over the kingdoms of the world, yet could he not touch the Church. Through every age have some testified to their connection with, and their adhesion to, the body of Christ—His Church. Against this the gates of hell have never prevailed, and shall never prevail. It is a spiritual body above the control, and out of the influence, of Satan; and may laugh to scorn the efforts of the Wicked One. This body shall exist for ever. Throughout the countless ages of eternity shall this body, on untiring pinions, with thankful songs of praise, wing on their way around their much-loved Lord.

Connected and mingled up with this Church have, at all times, been congregations of men called Churches. The early Apostolic Church mingled with, and gave a direction and constitution to, Churches. From the intimate blending which accompanied their intercourse they have been confounded. They are, however, perfectly distinct. The Church is indestructible. Churches have risen and have fallen. They that now exist shall cease to exist. The Church remains.

The Church in union with Christ is not held together by a code of written laws, and by a system of executive administration, but by a law superior, which binds spirit to spirit—a law of love. Christ speaks to the heart, and the response is love. The thief on the cross was touched to the heart, and his reply was, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." So, when our Lord said to the poor fishermen, "follow me, they left all and followed him." So, when Paul was arrested in his work of persecution, he cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And this is the cry of all when baptised into the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit. They are held by a bond of union, and their hearts are attuned to a desire to do their Master's will.

Churches are held together by laws, human laws, and are professedly based upon divine laws. For the regulation of Churches

no divine laws were promulgated. Practices obtained in the first age, and these have acquired the force of laws. Not that all modern churches are built after any early model. The practices pursued in early times ought to serve as examples in principle, and in some modern instances do in a measure serve to direct the constitution of Churches.

Hitherto there has been much confounding of things in themselves distinct. A true knowledge of the Church has not been obtained; and national and denominational churches, in their aggregate character, have been mistaken for the Church. This has produced much confusion. The claim of this or that Church to be an integral part of the Church has led to many bickerings. And *a* Church, assuming to be *the* Church, has claimed powers and privileges which belong not to *a* Church. Let us examine what the Scriptures say of the Church. Perhaps we shall best understand this by arranging an order of propositions.

1. The Church is composed of faithful believers in Christ, and are members of His body by spiritual union.
2. The city of St. John's vision, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is a figure to represent, and is a scripture declaration of, the Church.
3. The Church, the Holy City, is the spouse of Christ.
4. By reason of the intimate spiritual union with Christ, the Church is holy and without blemish.

1. *The Church is composed of faithful believers in Christ, and these are members of His body by spiritual union.*

St. Paul declares, in the following portions of Scripture, this great truth:—

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to *the Church, which is His body,* the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 22, 23).

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, *are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another*" (Rom. xii. 4, 5).

"For we being many are *one bread and one body:* for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. x. 17).

"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. vi. 15).

"And He gave some, Apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, *may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:* from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. iv. 11—16).

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: *for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones*" (Eph. v. 29—30).

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so, also, is Christ. For by *one spirit* are we all *baptised* into *one body,* whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink *into one spirit*" (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13).

These are a few of the many portions of Scripture which shew the union which subsists between Christ and the faithful, and

which union or membership, in its united character, is called the Church. By *one spirit* they are *baptised* into *one body*, and are thus in spiritual union. The spirit-baptism here spoken of must not be mistaken for water-baptism. It is my purpose to shew, hereafter, that water-baptism and spirit-baptism have no necessary connection. It is not by water they are baptised into one body, but it is by the *one spirit* they are all baptised into *one body*.

By this baptism of the spirit, or by this sprinkling of the spirit, we are made to drink into "one spirit." This constitutes membership and oneness. Men thus baptised are members of Christ's body. They are one with Christ, and partake of His humanity, of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. The humanity which they had before this baptism was in Adam, the humanity which they have after this baptism is in Christ. They are born anew and become new creatures. They are changed from the earthly to the heavenly. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the spirit is spirit." That which is born of the fleshly Adam is flesh, and that which is born of the spiritual Adam, or Christ, is spirit. And as in Adam all die, so in Christ are all made alive (1 Cor. xv. 22). All baptised by the spirit into Christ have a heartfelt, undoubting belief in Christ, so that *their spirits* confess Christ (1 John iv.). All who so confess Christ, He is in them (1 John iv. 15) and they in Him. By this union they have eternal life in Him (John iii. 15), life present, life to come. All in union, whether on earth or in heaven, compose His Church, that "He may fill all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth." This great doctrine of union with Christ will not be denied by divines. Only many of them assert that this union is effected by water baptism.* I

* "We hold, as implied in the aforesaid article of the creed, all the graces ascribed to (water) baptism in our catechism. For 'by one spirit we are all baptised into one body,' even the body of Jesus Christ. *We are all made to be 'His body,' members in particular of 'His body,' members of Christ*; and being thus baptised into them, we are baptised into His death, 'who died for our sins.'"—*Bishop of Exeter's Declaration.*

shall not stop to argue, at present, the falsity of this notion. I shall be content with the assertion, and the received opinion with many, that the Church is composed of members in intimate spiritual union with Christ.

The second important proposition is

The city of St. John's vision, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is a figure to represent, and is the scripture declaration of, the Church on earth.

As I have already written a book to show that the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is a figure employed to represent the Church on earth, I shall now do little more than enumerate some proofs of this.

The new heavens and new earth mentioned as connected with the Holy City (Rev. xxi. 1), do not predict a future, but refer to a past—the change from the first to the second dispensation. This is shown and proved by the two last chapters of Isaiah, which, when written, predicted the change, and wherein it is declared, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth."

The change, therefore, is not intended to be physical, but was spiritual and moral. The declaration that when "the first heaven and first earth were passed away there was no more sea," is conclusive of this.

The sea is a figure to represent Paganism. Isa. lx. 5; Ibid. xi. 15; Zech. x. 11; Psalm xcvi. 11; Ibid. lxxx. 11; Dan. vii. 3; Ezek. xlvii. 8; Rev. xii. 12; Ibid. xiii. 1; Psalm lxv., compare 2nd with 7th verse.

The Holy City represents the whole body in spiritual union with Christ; but, besides this, language is employed which predicts a future when heathenism is destroyed, when the city "is prepared as the bride adorned," or "there is no more sea," that is, when every nation is become Christian, and giving out members to the Holy City.

Divines declare this city as a figure of the Church triumphant

in heaven. This is true. But it is also more emphatically, because a larger purpose is served by it, a representation of the Church on earth.

As the territorial city Jerusalem, or the Zion of old, the seat of the material temple was a figure often employed by the sacred writers to represent the first, or Hebrew Church, so the spiritual city, New Jerusalem, is a figure employed to represent the second, or Christian Church. The material temple was a type of the spiritual temple. The material temple was raised in a material city; the spiritual temple is raised in a spiritual city. The Church on earth to which the Hebrews resorted was seated on the territorial city, Jerusalem; the Church to which Christians resort is within the spiritual city, New Jerusalem. The first was a Church of forms, and ceremonies, and of bondage; the latter is a Church of spiritual communion, and of freedom (Gal. iv. 21, to v. 1).

To this free Church we have now instant access. If we are baptised by the spirit into the one body, and become, as were the early Christians, "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" as were the faithful Hebrews, we shall have "come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. xii. 22). It has descended out of heaven, and the tabernacle of God is with men (Rev. xxi. 2, 3). "To this Church the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

The Church was to be placed in obscurity for a time. She was to flee into the wilderness (Rev. xii. 6). A knowledge of her for a time was to be withheld. The time, however, is come to favour Zion, and she is now to be made known to Christians. The time is come for her light to shine, and she shall be called "the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Is. lx. 14). The day is arrived when the city shall be known as "the Lord is there" (Ezek. xlviii. 34). Succeeding the Apostolic age to the present time the form of this city has been uncertain,

a dimness has surrounded her, she is now emerging into light. "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, *the holy city:* for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion" (Isa. lii. 1, 2). That this language of Isaiah has reference to the Christian Church, the term "daughter of Zion" shews. It is a term, as I have before stated,* for the second or Christian dispensation. And not this alone, but the whole context shews that this prophecy has relation to present times. The whole has relation to the remarkable period into which we are advancing. The captive condition of the Church is now about to be loosed. Perhaps not without a struggle will her freedom be achieved. But come it must. In spite of apparent difficulties she will be released. The efforts now making to rivet afresh her galling chains, in the providence of her God, will be the very means to bring about her release. A cloudy atmosphere is dispersed by a storm. Clouds and darkness have surrounded her, but the brightness of sunshine shall succeed. The Lord will stretch forth His arm, and that right early. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 1).

The spiritual, or New Jerusalem, represents the whole body of spiritual life in union with Christ. Those members in heaven, for "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all," and those on earth, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. xxi. 3). "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Eph. i. 10). And thus it is St. Paul uses the words to the converted Hebrews, "*Ye are come* unto Mount

* See "True Church"

Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." This truth is enforced in the Revelation, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. iii. 12).

That the spiritual city refers to the Church on earth, is most unequivocably shewn in the 11th chapter of the Revelation. When our Lord is foretelling the early struggles and prostrate condition of the Church, John, by dictation, writes, "And the Holy City shall they (her enemies) tread under foot forty and two months" (Rev. xi. 2). That the Holy City is trodden under foot of men is conclusive that she has her abiding on earth, as well as in heaven.

The Holy City, then, represents the Church on earth. The Church on earth is termed by divines militant. But this is a mistake, as they use the term, and it has given rise to much of the evil in the world, and has helped to foster the false Church. Besides representing, as the Holy City does, the Church triumphant in heaven, it represents the Church *triumphant* on earth. She is ever triumphant, on earth as in heaven, for "there shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27). And, again, "the gates of hell shall never prevail against her" (Matt. xvi. 18).

In the statement of her prostration for a time, there is no contradiction as opposed to her triumphant character. To portray her course, language is obliged to be employed suitable to men's ideas. When her members were few in past ages, a figure is employed to represent her obscurity, and she is said to have "fled into the wilderness" (Rev. xii. 6). And so, when the world's enmity persecuted her members, she is said "to be trodden under

* See "True Church" for an abundant testimony to this truth.

foot" (Rev. xi. 2). And so, again, it is written, "And it was given unto him (the beast) to make war with the saints, and to overcome them;" that is, in the estimation of the world, and to all appearance they are overcome. But that they are not spiritually overcome, a future verse implies: "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). Consequently, there are faithful members of Christ who do not worship the beast, whose names are written in the book of life. In the sense of struggling through the world the Church is militant. In the sense of perfect unity and purity she is ever triumphant.

The next important proposition is,

The Church, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, a body in spiritual union with Christ, is the spouse of Christ.

The false, or clergy Church, claims to be the spouse of Christ, whereas this is the harlot of Scripture, full of the filth of abominations.

The Holy City, into which nothing enters that defileth, is represented as the bride. "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me (writes John) away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (Rev. xxi. 9). She is here presented as the bride adorned, or prepared; and this is meant, as I have before shown,* to predict of a period when Paganism is overthrown, or, in the words of the Apocalypse, "there is no more sea;" when every nation upon earth is become nominally Christian, and giving out members to the Church, or Holy City. In this her present partially developed condition, when only few nations give out members, she is said to be affianced, and this is the idea which governs the language of St. Paul to the Corinthians, "I am jealous over you with godly

* See "True Church."

jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2).

This idea of espousal is presented by the old prophets, under the term "Maid of Jerusalem," or "Maid of Zion," a term to represent the Church under the second dispensation, and to whom the Lord is espoused. The term is also employed by our Lord when He said, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold, thy king cometh unto thee."

In Scripture language God was the husband of Zion, the first, or Hebrew Church; and Christ is espoused to the Maid of Zion, the second, or Christian Church.

Isaiah is full of the relationship of the Hebrew Church to God. He writes, "Thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called" (Isa. liv. 5). This imagery is employed by Jeremiah, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you" (Jer. iii. 14).

This relationship of God with the Hebrew people was a covenant union. Though they so repeatedly erred and were reproved, yet God distinguished them above all other nations, and called them His people. But this was an imperfect union. It was only a covenant union. It was an imperfect dispensation, and only foreshadowed a future in all things perfect. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been found for the second" (Heb. viii. 7).

Under this second dispensation Christ has a people in covenant, and under this covenant is spiritual union. It is a perfect dispensation, and nothing can enter it that defileth. By spiritual union men become members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones. They are verily one with Him. Accordingly St. Paul writes, *to the saints and to the faithful in Christ Jesus* which are at Ephesus (Eph. i. 1). "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife,

and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Eph. v. 30—32). It will be observed, that in the opening address he speaks of those thus in union as "*the saints and faithful.*" In the first age of christianity it is probable that most members of a young Church were faithful, because it implied resolve and faithfulness to elect to depart from a former false, and accept a new, religion. If there were any who joined from improper motives, they were not included in the spiritual union, because they were not of "the saints and faithful."

The first people in covenant union, and described as thus wedded to God, forsook their husband, and repeatedly committed abominations with false gods. In Scripture language, they went a whoring after other gods. They fell continually into idolatry. This was their great crime. This is the crime of the Polluted One of the New Testament. It is that she sets up many idols. She has "a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." This is the crime of the Clergy Church. She does not accept the One Mediator. She wants other mediators. This marks her impurity, and the absence of a living union with Christ. She goes after false gods, and though she claims union, she is not wedded to Christ. The False Church is not in spiritual union, and is only nominally Christian. The Church, the body of Christ, is in union. This union is perfect, and this governs the language of every part of the New Testament.

This brings us to the next proposition, and which demands the most earnest attention.

By reason of spiritual union with Christ the Church is holy, and without blemish.

St. Paul writes, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might *sanctify and cleanse* it with the washing of water *by the Word,*

that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should *be holy and without blemish*" (Eph. v. 25—27).

The faultless character of the Church is the explanation of the misunderstood prophecy of Isaiah, which has been interpreted to mean a holy, sanctified, separated community, or nation, locally seated about the territorial Jerusalem. This opinion, doubtless, is erroneous. It finds its fulfilment in this dispensation in the glorious unity, and imperishable and perfected character, and unassailable position, of the spiritual Church. Isaiah is predicting the glorious advancement of the Church, when she shall be called "*The city of the Lord,* the Zion of the Holy One of Israel;" when the Gentiles shall come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising, and when the days of her mourning shall be ended: and he writes, "*Thy people also shall be all righteous;* they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isa. lx. 21).

In accordance with the character of purity assigned the Church, only those made holy by spiritual union with Christ are admitted members of the Holy City. "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or *maketh a lie*: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. xxi. 27). All are written in the Lamb's book of life who accept the Word. They are sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water *by the Word.* Not with the washing of water by the minister or priest, but with the washing of water by the Word, or the Great High Priest, or God.* Not with the baptism by water, but with the baptism by the spirit. I hope to clearly define, hereafter, the distinctive differences; and though there are two baptisms, one of man and another of God, yet there is but one faith, and one baptism, by which God is in all, and through all, of the one body, His Church.

* "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John i. 1; 1 John i. 1).

The purity of the Church on earth presents to the natural mind a great difficulty, seeing that all men err and come short of the glory of God. This difficulty has led to the coining of the two words, militant and triumphant, to meet the difficulty. And thus two Churches have been raised in the minds of most men. One Church, which they call the mystical or triumphant, the Church of purity; the other, the militant, the visible, composed of the mixed, good and bad. The Scriptures declare of only one, the Church, in union with Christ. There are many Churches, but they are only nominally Christian; they bear Christ's name, but are not in union.

The purity of the Church on earth does not consist in that the members never err, but that the righteousness of Christ is imputed. All men err. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and *to cleanse us* from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 8, 9). *All* men sin, but *some* who confess to their God the unrighteousness of their sin, are made clean by the righteousness of Christ. All that believe in Him are cleansed by Him, and His righteousness is imputed unto them. A faithful heart-belief is given by the Spirit of God, and this it is to be born anew of God, and "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John iii. 9). Of Christ it is written, "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever *abideth* in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, *neither known Him*" (1 John iii. 5, 6). All in union sin not. To be not in union is to be without the Church. All admitted to the Holy City are in union, and therein nothing entereth that defileth.

All in union have no religious pollutions. They do not set up false gods. They have no expectation of pardon but in and through Christ. They worship only God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. Within the city "is the throne of God, and of

the Lamb, and His servants serve *Him*." * The *Him* is their God, their Redeemer, their Sanctifier. They trust not in vain ceremonials, or self-offerings of any kind. They need no other light than that of their Lord God. They need no lesser light, either small or great. They need no candle, neither light of the sun. All is brightness to them. There is no darkness there. They have no idol set up called the Church, a figment of the brain, for which men band themselves together. There is no temple in the holy city (Rev. xxi. 22), for "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof." He is both the temple and the light. "I," said our Saviour, "am the light of the world." And St. John writes, "This, then, is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." All born of God, and who dwell in Him, and have fellowship with Him, "walk in the light, as He is in the light."

All who walk in the light, and have fellowship with Christ, belong to the Church. However sinful they may have been, yet when they are led by the Spirit of God into fellowship with Christ, all their sins are washed away. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 1). They who walk after the Spirit are led by the Spirit, and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). There is a conflict ever going on between the flesh and the spirit, but those who are led by the Spirit of God are "in these things more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37).

Those led by the Spirit of God belong to the Church. But what is said in this same chapter of those not led by the Spirit of God? It matters not whether water-baptised, and thus a name given them whereby they are called Christians, but if they walk not after the Spirit which "is life because of righteousness," but

* Observe the unity of God and the Lamb by the expression "Him."

walk after the flesh, and thus mind the things of the flesh, which "is death" (Rom. viii. 6), then the Spirit of God dwells not in them. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, *he is none of His*" (Rom. viii. 9). A similar declaration to this is found in many other parts of Scripture. The same great truth is taught in the parable of the vine. Our Lord says, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." And, again, those who abide not are utterly powerless, and the promises of Christ in no sense apply to them. The branch, except it abide in the vine, can bear no fruit. And our Lord says, without me "ye can do nothing" (John xv). All who abide not have no part or lot with Christ, have no fellowship with Him, and are not members of His Church.

The whole of the prophecies point to the perfected character of the Church under the present dispensation. Jeremiah, in the 31st chapter, prophecies thereof. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and *I will remember their sin no more*" (Jer. xxxi. 31—34). The whole chapter is of the character these words manifest, and it concludes by showing that the spiritual city shall be built to the Lord: "And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward

the east, *shall be Holy unto the Lord*; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever." In like manner does Isaiah prophecy of the Church under the second dispensation, that all "her children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of her children." That under this new covenant, when the seed of the Church shall inherit the Gentiles, though for a small moment God hath forsaken her, yet with great mercies will he gather her. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;* but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord;* and great shall be the peace of thy children. *In righteousness shalt thou be established:* thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, *and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord*" (Isa. liv. 10—17).

* This language has a double meaning; figuratively the mountains and hills stand for Churches. The Church is sometimes called "God's holy mountain," and the mountains and hills are put in contrast thereto, or in juxta-position therewith (Ezek. xxxvi.). God's "holy mountain" (Isa. xi. 9), or "holy hills" (Ps. xv. 1), is a figure standing for the true Church, or the true people of God; and mountains and hills are figures standing for congregations of men (Isa. lv. 12). This explanation, as many divines know, gives intelligence and meaning to the language of the Psalms, as well as to other prophetical parts of the Bible.

In conformity with these predictions of the older prophets of the perfected character of the Christian Church, St. Paul writes to the Hebrews, in the 8th chapter—"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." St. Paul then quotes the language of Jeremiah, to exhibit the predicted excellence of the second covenant Church.

St. Paul goes on to show that the first covenant had a worldly sanctuary, and a tabernacle into which the priests entered; "but Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come," under the second covenant "there is a greater and more perfect tabernacle *not made with hands*" (Heb. ix. 11). The first was only a pattern of good things to come; but the latter is the good things come. The first was imperfect, the latter perfect. The first required an observance of ordinances, the latter is spiritual union. Under the first, no man dare approach unto God but the high priest once every year; under the latter, every man may come with "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19).

The purity and holiness of the Church seems to meet with contradiction, in the fact that our Lord spoke in the parables of good and bad being mingled in "the kingdom of heaven." This is a seeming contradiction. It is only seeming. To every godly man who believes in the verities of the Gospel it will be only seeming. Infidel men may attempt to trace in it contradiction. Notwithstanding this seeming contradiction even pious men have remained satisfied, without attempting to clear up the difficulty. Doubtless, say they, there is the Church holy and without blemish, the mystical Church, the Church triumphant, but the Church visible is composed of good and bad. And thus they make two Churches, and they claim for both to be in union with Christ. The Scriptures make no mention of two Churches in union, they

distinctly disavow it. They announce but one Church in union. And this Church is said to be composed of members of Christ's body, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and *which are on earth* even in Him" (Eph. i.). All gathered "even in Him" become members of His body, are His Church. This Church is declared to be holy and without blemish. Divines create another Church, composed of good and bad, which they call militant. And to justify themselves in this, they appeal to the existence from first of the several corrupt communities called Churches, and to the declaration of our Lord in the parables, that there would be good and bad to the end of the world in "the kingdom of heaven." As though corrupt parts could make up a perfect whole. Based upon this statement of our Lord, learned divines, even pious Christian men, have believed that national Churches were the affianced of Christ, that these were so many branches of a great whole to whom the Lord of heaven and earth was wedded. The Lord of spiritual life linked in such intimate union, as "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh," with temporal decay! incorruption to corruption! the God and Father *

* However difficult to our comprehension the divinity of Christ,—the being very God,—yet it is an undoubted truth. "The Son is equal to the Father as touching his Godhead," and he is mentioned by Isaiah as "the everlasting Father" (Isa. ix. 6) And the declarations of our Lord prove this truth. "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30). And, again, in answer to the demand of Philip, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," our Lord said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father?" (John xiv. 8, 9). And, again, "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth Him that sent me" (John xii. 44, 45). This mighty truth, this truth of truths, the keystone of the arch, is again and again asserted by our Lord, and was the declaration which brought upon Him the accusation of blasphemy by the high priest before the council, "He hath spoken blasphemy;

of spirits to mortality! Think, my readers, of that close union which subsists between Christ and His Church. Members of the Church are members of His body. They are one with Him (John xvii). In him they have eternal life. From their existence as the sons of God to endless ages they have life with Him. Their past, their present, and all their future, bound up in eternal life with God their Saviour. Oh, my beloved brethren, do not let the unworthy thought again enter into your minds that Christ could link Himself with pollution, with crime, with an abomination of men, if only they were baptised with water by man's hands *in the name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The purity of the Church, I mean the whole Church, composed of members in heaven and members *on earth,* is an inserted truth throughout the New Testament. And the purity of those on earth consists in this, that they trust wholly in the Lord Jesus. Every other supposed trust to which other men lean is to them a broken reed. There is but one name under heaven whereby we can be

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what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard His blasphemy." So far from being blasphemy, the mighty truth, which all men are called upon to believe, is, that God in Christ came upon earth to draw all men unto Him; that God the Father of spirits assumed humanity, and in the likeness of man put Himself in personal communion with men, that He may gather the spirits of men into union with Himself, and with the world of spirits surrounding Him, that he may gather unto Himself all things in one, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Himself. With this mighty truth all things cohere together in beautiful order; without it religion is a mixture of contrarieties. Upon it the soul reposes with holy and calm contentment; without it the soul is tossed in a raging sea of doubts and perplexities. With it the Scriptures unfold to man their inestimable riches; without it the Scriptures seem poor and empty, and teem with apparent contradictions. If this be not the truth, then does the whole superstructure for man's redemption fall to the ground. If the declarations of equality with God be untrue, then is the declaration of our Lord that in Him is "the resurrection and the life" false.

saved—the Lord Jesus.* Some there are who will accept this, and trust to it apparently, but disclose their doubts by adding some other support. They must receive something externally, according to some strictly attested form, or they must do something

* In my former work I have advocated, because the Scriptures declare, that all Pagan men to whom the Gospel has not been taught "shall be tried out of the books" which they have accepted for the regulation of their lives (Rev. xx. 12). This declaration, "that there is but one name under heaven whereby we can be saved," appears at variance with a doctrine of irresponsible ignorance. The Scriptures have many antithetical propositions, as every reader knows, and it is only by a reference to the context that the meaning intended can be arrived at. Of course, in the declaration that there is only one name whereby we can be saved, it means when preached, when taught. Rejection is crime. Absence of knowledge, when unattainable, is not crime. When the law of righteousness is understood, men will be tried by that law; when it has not been heard, God winks at the time of ignorance (Acts xvii. 30).

With regard to the antithetical propositions in the sacred book, it must be remembered that the Scriptures are a comprehensive whole. They relate to every possible combination of feelings, and thoughts, and circumstances, connected with God's dealings with men. These include every varied relationship through time, and in a small measure through eternity. In a comparatively small book are shadowed forth things that have relation to countless myriads of human beings, in their actions and thoughts, through successive ages, in all their combined and varied relations to God. In an exceedingly elaborated book it is difficult, when treating of varied and modified, yet combined, forms of things, to avoid antithetical propositions. In a condensed book this is still more difficult. Were an explanation to follow each apparently opposed proposition, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." There may, also, be another reason for antithetical declarations; in the providence of God, and to render this state probationary, they may be written that some "seeing may not see, and hearing they may not understand."

As explanatory of the declaration that "There is but one name under heaven whereby we can be saved," we must recollect that in Christ all are made alive (1 Cor. xv. 22); and that, as Christ will gather all things unto Himself, it is certain, though in the flesh Pagans do not see God, that when they have cast off mortality, He shall be seen and known of them.

Upon the subject of universal life in Christ, see Mr. Thom's "Exhibitions of Human Enmity."

themselves after some precise definite course, or the saving grace of Jesus cannot be received. It is true, there are many duties to God and to man. Observe them! but put not your trust in them. The faithful put their trust in One alone, and He is their Lord, their Sanctifier, their Redeemer. He is their God. They have no lesser gods, no minor deities. Of the people who so trust in Christ, united in one body, it is of whom Isaiah predicted in his 60th chapter, "They shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

Under the first dispensation, the Church in covenant-union were not all righteous; under the second, the Church in covenant, which is a spiritual union, they are all righteous. The first Church was continually drawn off to idolatry; the second, which is perfect, cannot be drawn away to idolatry. And thus it is that the Church is built upon a rock, and impregnable. And thus it is that St. John, in his epistle, writes that those who abide in Christ sin not (iii. 6). By fellowship with their great Head, the members, when two or three agree as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be granted unto them, and where they are He is in the midst of them. But let us take heed, let us not mistake each his own position. We read of some that, St. John says, "went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." It is worthy of our earnest attention that St. John, after concluding the marks of spiritual union, finishes his epistle in these words, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

In the 2nd chapter of his epistle, St. John writes, "Whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." Now that they who keep His word are not they who are linked to external forms, not they who are careful to observe ceremonials, we shall discover in the 4th chapter, where St. John tells us who are in union, and who

are of the spirit of Antichrist. He begins with a caution not to believe every professing spirit, but to try the spirits whether they are of God. And then he shows who are in Christ, even they that confess "that Christ is come in the flesh." And this is not a mere lip-confession, it is accompanied by unmistakeable signs of union, for they who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God, and this in-dwelling of God produces love to God and love to man.

Every man who thus confesses Christ will not have an idol. A true Christian will know that Christ is all-sufficient, that idol-worship of every form, however modified, however excused by plausible pretences, is a declaration that Christ is not all-sufficient; that He alone cannot cleanse wholly from sin; that He is not the Christ or God with us. It is an admission that the false worshipper has some lingering doubt, and he betrays that he has not the right heart-belief, and *his spirit* does not, therefore, confess that Christ is come in the flesh. He seeks after some other propitiatory sacrifice, he is doubtful of the full value of the sacrifice once offered, and he looks about for some other. And there is another sign by which to try the spirits if God dwell in them, "we dwell in Him when He hath given us of His spirit," and this spirit is love, "for love is of God." If there be idol-worship, and if there be absence of love, then the spirit does not confess "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." Now recollect that it is not mere lip-confession, but heart-belief, that evidences to the confession that Christ is come in the flesh, and by the fruits which accompany such confession. Try the past ages by the standard St. John has erected, and see if many professing Christians do not come far short of the marks which indicate union with the Church.

In the present number I have not intended to conclude the argument to show that the Church is a body in spiritual union with Christ irrespective of a clergy order. The subject of the next is connected with the argument of the present. A separate

heading was given to each number to show the probable course of argument, as well as for convenience in the pamphlet form.

Let us bear in mind the chief contents of this number:—

The Church on earth is composed of members in spiritual union with Christ.

The Holy City, New Jerusalem, represents the Church on earth, and is the Scripture declaration thereof.

The Holy City is called the bride of the Lamb, or of Christ, and the New Testament Church is the bride of Christ. They mean, therefore, one and the same thing.

The Church is "holy and without blemish." Members of the Church, by reason of spiritual union with Christ, are held to be pure and sinless.

I conceive these four propositions to be established.

The perfected character of the Church being established, how comes it that our Lord, in the parables, described "the kingdom of heaven" as including "good and bad?" "The kingdom of heaven is as a great draw net gathering good and bad." And again, "The kingdom of heaven is like a field where an enemy came and sowed tares," and which tares are to remain, and to be left until the harvest. How comes it that the Church, which is everywhere described under the new dispensation as perfect, without spot or blemish, and yet we find a declaration that "the kingdom of heaven" admits within it many bad members. How comes this? Where is the explanation of this apparent anomaly? Both declarations, though apparently contradictory, professing Christians have not sought clearly to understand, but they have been ready enough to seize and to wrest them to their purposes. The claimed infallibility of the harlot Church is based upon one declaration; the admission into her body of corrupt members is excused by the other.

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(No. III.)

THE

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

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THE TERM "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" AS USED BY OUR LORD, HAS TWO MEANINGS: ONE FOR THE NOMINAL KINGDOM, THE OTHER FOR THE SPIRITUAL, OR TRUE, KINGDOM. THE ONE MEANING, AS APPLIED TO THE NOMINAL KINGDOM, INCLUDING GOOD AND BAD, IS NOT THE CHURCH. THE OTHER, AS APPLIED TO THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM ON EARTH, IS THE CHURCH.

It will be perceived that to establish the proposition which heads this paper, is to cast down a main argument which has been used by divines in favour of a visible community of mingled good and bad, which they call the Church.

In the preceding paper I have attempted to establish, and as I think have done so, that—

1. The Church on earth is composed of members in spiritual union with Christ.

2. The Holy City, New Jerusalem, represents the Church, and is the Scripture declaration thereof.

3. The Holy City is called the bride of the Lamb, or of Christ, and the New Testament Church is the bride of Christ. And as there is but one bride, they mean, therefore, one and the same thing.

4. Members of the Church, by reason of spiritual union with Christ, are declared to be pure and sinless, and thus the Church is described as holy, without spot or blemish.

Carrying with us these proved propositions as parts of the argument, to show that the Church on earth is composed of persons in spiritual union with Christ, irrespective of a Clergy order, let us now consider the apparent objections to these

established truths. They consist chiefly in some declarations of our Lord, and in the fact that the early Apostolic churches presented a mixture of good and bad members.

And first of the declarations of our Lord which are to be found in the parables, which seem to describe the Church on earth as made up of mixed good and evil. Our Lord is said to describe what is called the visible Church in these parables. "The kingdom of heaven," said He, "is like a great draw-net, gathering good and bad." Though the declarations with regard to the purity of the Church, as we have shown, are so positive, yet they have been rendered nugatory, as affecting the opinions of men, by the apparently opposite declarations in the parables.

"'The kingdom of heaven' is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat."

"'The kingdom of heaven' is likened unto ten virgins, of whom five were wise and five were foolish."

"'The kingdom of heaven' is as a man travelling into a far country, and he called his servants and delivered unto them his goods. Uuto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every man according to his several ability." Of these servants one is unprofitable, and "he is cast into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In the parables describing the mixed good and bad, imagery is used to show the employment of men both good and bad in God's vineyard. Be it remembered I am not arguing against this. I am not arguing that the unprofitable servant is not employed in the ministry. I am attempting to prove that this body of mixed good and bad is not the Church, the affianced of Christ. And I shall, in a future paper, show that none of the promises apply to this body, but only, and exclusively, to those in perfect spiritual union.

Let us enquire into the meaning of the term "kingdom of heaven," as thus used in the sense of including good and bad?

The Church, we have shown, receives only the good; it cannot, therefore, mean the Church. What does it mean?

Throughout God's dealings with men there have been a chosen people. In the patriarchal dispensation they are called the sons of God. They were of the seed of Seth, who was born an appointed seed instead of Abel. Men through this seed began to call upon the name of the Lord, or, as it is in the margin, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord" (Gen. iv. 26). The patriarchs were of this seed. These men and their seed are called the sons of God (Gen. vi. 2).

Under the Mosaic dispensation, the children of Abraham after the flesh, became the sons of God, or children of the kingdom of heaven (2 Chron. xiii. 8; Matt. xxi. 43). Chosen out of, and selected from, the nations, the descendants of Abraham were accepted by covenant with God. Under this covenant the people were God's people. He promised to this people He would be a God (Gen. xxii. 8). All other people had other false gods, but this people had the Almighty for their God. Under this sovereignty, though they often rebelled and fell off to idolatry, yet, they were God's people, and they constituted under the covenant God's kingdom on earth.

As we all know, this covenant kingdom was overthrown, and, as Daniel had predicted, the God of heaven came and set up another kingdom, a kingdom which was to overthrow all other kingdoms, and ultimately to fill the whole earth. John the Baptist proclaimed the coming of this kingdom when he declared "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." God, in the person of Christ, was then on earth to establish the kingdom.

This kingdom was to fill the earth. It included good and bad. It is progressing and will fill the earth, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). When Christ established His kingdom, He commanded His disciples to "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost:" the name of a trinity in unity. All thus baptized belong, nominally, to the kingdom of heaven. They have been named in the name of the King of heaven, and are called Christians—Christ being the King of heaven.*

This kingdom, composed of all nominal Christians, includes all men, good and bad, thus baptized. But within this kingdom there is another kingdom, receiving only the good. All are baptized outwardly with water, but few are baptized inwardly by the Spirit. The few baptized by the Spirit, are in intimate spiritual union. Accordingly, we shall find "the kingdom of heaven" described in these two characters,—one to import the nominal union, including good and bad; the other the positive union of the good.

We have seen where the term is used in the one sense; let us see where it is used in the other.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 3).

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 10).

"I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, *ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. v. 20).

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. xv. 50).

"It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Luke xviii. 25).

These are some of the instances in which the term is used, wherein it is seen not to mean the nominal kingdom, but a true and especial kingdom.

In some instances, statements are made in connection with the term, which seem to contradict each other; and the explanation of the apparent contradiction is to be found in the two meanings to be assigned to the term. It is written,

* I and my Father are One. John x. 30—38; Ibid xiv. 10, 11.

"The kingdom of God *cometh not with observation:* neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, *the kingdom of God is within you*" (Luke xvii. 20). And, again, it is written, "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till *they have seen* the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix. 1). These two apparently contradictory declarations find an explanation in the two uses to which the term kingdom of God, or kingdom of heaven, is put. When it is said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, for it is within you," the true spiritual kingdom is meant; and when it is said, "There be some stand here which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power," the nominal kingdom is intended.

The spiritual eternal kingdom we all know mentally. We all know that it is the world of spirits in union and communion with the Great God, the Eternal of heaven. In this kingdom are many spirits yet in the flesh. They are a stream of men who, like the faithful, converted, Hebrew Christians, *are come* unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, *the heavenly* (*or new*) *Jerusalem,* and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and *Church* of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and *to the spirits of just men made perfect*" (Heb. xii. 22, 23). These spirits in the flesh are the justified in Christ (Rom. viii. 1). They are those that have life in Christ; and this life is eternal, present, everlasting life* (John iii. 36). These spirits in the flesh, together

* I have argued in the "True Church," that the death to which our first parents were subject, as the consequence of disobedience, was not, as is supposed by divines, mortal death, but spiritual death. To have life in Christ is to be restored from that spiritual death. Consequently, we find it declared that all in Christ have eternal life (John vi. 47). That this eternal is present, as well as future, is self-evident, and that our Lord does not account anything of mortal death, and that this follows as a simple law of all flesh-nature, He said, "If a man keep my saying he shall never taste of death (John viii. 52). Now all flesh tastes of death;

with those departed out of the flesh, compose the Church, the bride, the Lamb's wife.

The nominal kingdom is composed of good and bad. Over this kingdom God rules. God rules over the whole world, but in a particular sense, He rules more especially over a people called after His name. Other people claim other gods to rule

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and this was so evident that the Jews took great offence at the declaration, and said, "Now we know thou hast a devil."

This spiritual life affords an explanation to the prophetic language of Isaiah in the 26th chapter (see especially 18th and 19th verses), and to the language of our Lord as given by St. John (v. 24—29): "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; *but is passed from death unto life* The hour is coming, and *now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: *and they that hear shall live.*" And succeeding these words, our Lord further declares prophetically, "The hour is coming," the period is approaching, "when *all* that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," or condemnation.

I have stated in the "True Church," that the language of Daniel, in his last vision, applies to his own people the Jews; and when he writes—"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2), it is predictive of their condition when they are in-gathered into the Christian body; that is, some will be nominal, others true, Christians. Just as with the whole world, when all nations are nominally Christian up to the time of the end, some persons will be spiritually born again, or rise out of the grave of spiritual death to the resurrection of life; or they will hear the voice of Him and not believe and rise to a resurrection of condemnation.

All have life in Christ (1 Cor. xv. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 10; John iii. 17; Ibid. xii. 3). Some who now hear the word and believe on Christ have present and eternal life (John v. 24, 25). And some who hear and do not believe have a resurrection unto condemnation (John v. 29; Ibid. iii. 17, 18).

Let the literalists pause before they condemn these observations; "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. iii. 5, 6).

Upon the subject of life in Christ, see the Rev. — Thom's "Universal Salvation." I do not uphold all he advocates, but there is, in my judgment, some truth in this book.

over them, but this people claim to be ruled over by the God. God in Christ came upon earth, and a new name was given unto men. From the time that men were first called Christians at Antioch, have they gathered together under this then new, but now familiar name. This name is the name of the King of heaven, and all bearing this name are within "the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven, in this sense, is composed of persons bearing the name of Christ, and they are ruled over by Christ, or the God of heaven. Any people, or nation, having other gods than the God, belong not to the kingdom of heaven. This explains the meaning of the prediction in the Revelation, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." When this prediction is fulfilled, all heathen kingdoms will have become Christian kingdoms, that is, nominally, Christian kingdoms. "The kingdon of heaven," in the sense intended, is put in contradistinction to other kingdoms —the kingdom of Mahomet, the kingdom of Confucius, &c., &c.

In the kingdom of heaven, in this sense, are numerous visible communities, called Churches: congregations of men recognising one common bond of unity, but separated into individual bodies, by some one or more distinctive differences. These Churches are numerous; but they may be classed under two designations, which include them all, National and Denominational. The common bond of union is the name of Christ—the members of all Churches being baptised in the name of God, Christ being God, they are baptised in the name of Christ. By this they are held in nominal union with Christ. These as a whole compose the kingdom of heaven in the sense of including good and bad.

Christians, misled by the teaching of eminent divines in past ages, have concurred in believing that the kingdom of heaven, of mixed good and bad, is the Church. The learned, judicious, and good man Hooker has, in this matter, led men astray. Far be it from me to detract from the merits of this undoubtedly great man. He wrote at a time when it did not please God, no doubt

for great and wise purposes, to permit a perfect knowledge of the Church. This is evident from the tenor of prophecy. It detracts, therefore, nothing from the merits of a writer of the sixteenth century, that he should not be acquainted in all its force with that which a wise and gracious God intended for the nineteenth.*

Hooker had a clear conception of the holy Church, or, as he terms her, the mystical Church; and which he perceived had relation to earth, by the existence of some of her members on earth, yet in the flesh. He writes at page 285, vol. 1 :†

In this language we have faithfully pourtrayed the Church, and which it will be perceived Hooker rightly declares "can be but

* See "True Church."—Explanation of Ezekiel's prophecy.—Ezek. xlviii. 35.

† "That Church of Christ, which we properly term his body mystical, can be but one; neither can that one be sensibly discerned by any man, inasmuch as the parts thereof are some in heaven already with Christ, and the rest that are on earth (albeit their natural persons be visible) we do not discern under this property whereby they are truly and infallibly of that body. Only our minds by intellectual conceit are able to apprehend that such a real body there is, a body collective, because it containeth a huge multitude; a body mystical, because the mystery of their conjunction is removed altogether from sense. Whatsoever we read in Scripture concerning the endless love and saving mercy which God sheweth towards His Church, the only proper subject thereof is this Church. Concerning this flock it is that our Lord and Saviour hath promised, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands.' They who are of this society have such marks and notes of distinction from all others, as are not objects unto our sense; only unto God who seeth their hearts and understandeth all their secret cogitations, unto him they are clear and manifest. All men knew Nathaniel to be an Israelite. But our Saviour, piercing deeper, giveth further testimony of him than men could have done with such certainty as He did, 'Behold indeed an Israelite, in whom there is no guile.' If we profess, as Peter did, that we love the Lord, and profess it in the hearing of men, charity is prone to believe all things, and therefore charitable men are likely to think we do so, as long as they see no proof to the contrary. But that our love is sound and sincere, that it cometh from 'a pure heart, a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned,' who can pronounce, saving only the Searcher of all men's hearts, who alone intuitively doth know in this kind who are His?"

one." How comes it then that, in a few paragraphs after, we find it written, "Is it then possible that the self-same men should belong to the synagogue of Satan and to the Church of Jesus Christ? Unto that Church which is His mystical body, not possible;* because that body consisteth of none but only true Israelites, true sons of Abraham, true servants and saints of God." Thus far is the recognition of *the one Church;* but he proceeds to show another, not thus perfect, which he calls the visible Church. "Howbeit of *the visible body and Church* of Jesus Christ; those may be, and often times are, in respect of the main parts of their outward profession, who, in regard to their inward disposition of mind, yea, of external conversation, yea, even of some parts of their very profession, are most worthily both hateful in the sight of God Himself, and in the eyes of the sounder part of the visible Church most execrable"!! According to these opinions, there are two Churches, one holy and without blemish, another full of defects; the one only visible to God, the other visible to men.

The Scriptures nowhere delineate two Churches at the same time, in union with Christ. Under the Mosiac dispensation they portray the imperfect Hebrew Church in imperfect union with God. Under the Christian dispensation, they shew the perfect Christian Church in perfect union with Christ. The New Testament speaks of many Churches in connection, but not in union. They have relation to, but not intimate union with, Christ. The seven Asiatic Churches had relation, but not union. There is but one New Testament Church in union.

Now, what led divines, and among them Hooker, to get the notion that there was on earth a mystical Church, and a visible Church? Just this, that our Lord taught that, in the kingdom of heaven, there should be good and bad. Many of His parables taught this. Hooker writes, "Our Saviour, therefore, compareth the kingdom of heaven to a net, whereunto all which cometh

* Even this is very different teaching to that of the Bishop of Exeter. See the bishop's late Declaration.

neither is, nor seemeth, fish: His Church He compareth unto a field, where tares, manifestly known and seen by all men do grow, intermingled with good corn, and even so shall continue till the final consummation of the world." The declaration of our Saviour, that the kingdom of heaven should include good and bad, led men to believe that there is a visible as well as an invisible Church. They took for granted that the term "kingdom of heaven" meant the Church. And although the Church was defined in such very explicit terms, and plainly there was but one, yet they thought our Lord intended there should be two; one invisible composed of the mystical members of His body; the other composed of all men that were baptized ecclesiastically in His name.

There was also another reason which led them to conceive that Christ intended there should be two Churches. The mystical, or rather the proper, or true Church in union was evident, and there were expressions in the sacred writings which led to the belief in a visible corporate body. Among them: "Tell it to the Church." —"And there was added to the Church."—"Hear the Church." These and other like expressions, which evidently apply to a flesh and blood, and not alone to a spiritual community, induced a belief in an ecclesiastically-governed body, called "the Church."

Like the term "kingdom of heaven," so the word Church has had two meanings assigned it in the Scriptures. Out of this fact have arisen the confused notions about the Church. We have seen how it is used to describe the mystical members of Christ's body. It is used in the other sense as in St. Paul's address to the Corinthians—"Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth." And again, as used in the Revelation, in reference to the Asiatic Churches. "Of the Church of Sardis."—"Of the Church in Philadelphia," &c., &c. It is very easily seen, as all persons know, that the word Church has two distinctive meanings: one for the members of Christ's body, the other for

congregations of men professing Christianity, called a Church. To understand what is meant by many of the foregoing expressions they must be examined with their context, and then only by the grace of God enlightening us shall we understand what is meant by them. They more properly belong to another part of my subject, and I propose, therefore, to examine them carefully hereafter.

The Church, under the present dispensation, is declared to be perfect. Under the Hebrew dispensation the Church was imperfect; the gates of hell prevailed; the people were continually drawn off to idolatry. Under the Christian dispensation the Church is perfect, and the gates of hell cannot prevail, nothing can enter therein that defileth. Ancient prophecy proclaimed it, and the New Testament everywhere declares it (Heb. viii). The knowledge of this has been acted upon throughout the past. In every age of christianity, Christian men have sought to set up the several Churches by this exalted standard. And it is acting upon this opinion that the false Church claims infallibility. The purity of the mystical Church no divine denies. Divines seek only to place side by side with it, what they call the visible or militant Church, and which they are compelled to admit, has within it much of evil, but which they say does not overthrow its claim to be the Church, justifying their opinion by the declarations of our Lord in the parables, that good and bad would mingle in the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven that admits evil cannot be the Church.

There is but one Church, and that Church, described as perfect, cannot be the Church of mixed good and evil. That which is made up of some imperfect parts cannot be a perfect whole. When "the kingdom of heaven" is described as like "unto ten virgins, five of whom are wise and five are foolish," it cannot be the same "kingdom of heaven," "likened unto a pearl of great price." The one presents an image of mixed good and evil; the other of unmixed good. The term "kingdom of heaven,"

therefore, does not at all times mean the Church, unless it can be discovered that the Church is spoken of in the New Testament as imperfect? Divines refer to the imagery employed in the figure of the vine, as descriptive of the Church, and contend that the branch that beareth not fruit is still a part of the vine; but if they will carefully examine it, they will discover that the Church is described as the parts that bear fruit. With these only is there union admitted. If a man abide not in Christ he is cast forth as a withered branch. Still they say, though withered, the branch forms a part of the vine. Nay, this is not so, "every branch that beareth not fruit He taketh away." In conformity to the imagery employed in the other parables, such an one belongs to the nominal kingdom, but he belongs not to Christ's body, the Church. He has been named into the kingdom, but he has not been received into the Church. He has not been made clean through the Word, consequently he abides not in Christ. And without this abiding he can bring forth no fruit. Our Lord goes on to declare, "herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; *so shall ye be my disciples.*" Then follows in the most touching language, the intimate union which subsists between Christ and those that abide in Him. And when we come to enquire into the promises, we shall find that they in no way apply to the merely nominal Christian. Let all earnest searchers after truth carefully examine the 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of St. John, and they cannot fail to discover that the withered branches form no part of the Church. The men whom these represent, form a part of the kingdom into which they have been baptized by water, but they form no part of the Church into which others have been baptized by the Spirit.

Some may say, there are then two baptisms. Not, as the Nicene Creed, and as St. Paul declare, one baptism. This apparent difficulty we hope to remove when we come to consider the subject of baptism.

The parables then do not declare the Church to have for

members mixed good and bad. They declare this to be the character of the nominal kingdom, but not of the Church. And there are not two Churches, or two opposite conditions of the one Church. There is but one Church, and that is composed of the spirits of the just made perfect. If it can be discovered that the intimate union, described to exist between Christ and His people, applies to the whole body of nominal Christians, the mixed good and evil, then I confess there will be room to surmise that our Lord contemplated two Churches, or two conditions of the one Church. Let every parable be examined, and it will be found that, unless a parable has relation to the good alone, the term kingdom of heaven, or kingdom of God, does not mean the Church.

Another important consideration shows that the bad form no part of the Church. In the parable of the field of wheat and tares, the wheat is sown by the good husbandman, the tares by an enemy. Surely it will not be contended that that which an enemy doth, can be accepted as the labour of the Lord of the soil. Surely that which mars and disfigures, and chokes up with rank weeds, and which is to be burned, is not the accepted. Surely the introduced by Satan cannot be members of that body which is represented as bone of Christ's bone, and flesh of His flesh. Surely Christ doth not have thus foisted upon Him members of the Evil one. The tares, though in the nominal kingdom, cannot belong to the Church; if so, Satan doth prevail, and Christ declared that he should not. The field, then, as described like unto "the kingdom of heaven," cannot be meant to represent the Church. It represents only the outward and visible kingdom, and not that kingdom which is represented "as within you," or, that kingdom which our Lord declared as His "not of this world."

The Hebrew dispensation being an imperfect dispensation, the whole body of the people were espoused to God (Jer. xxxi. 32). But under the new covenant only the instructed of the Lord are

espoused to Him (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Ephes. v. 23—33; Heb. viii. 6—13; Rev. xxi. 9, 10, and 27). This most important truth is taught throughout the whole New Testament. It is only by abiding in Christ that we belong to His Church. We are not of His house unless "we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. iii. 6). And this we cannot do unless sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God (Heb. vi. 11), and drawn unto Jesus by God (John vi. 44, 45).

A correspondent of confessed high-church or Puseyite principles, writes thus: "If our Lord ever called the visible body of believers here on earth, the 'kingdom of heaven,' as you are compelled to admit, how much the more may we confer upon them *the less glorious title* of the Church. What you call the *nominal* kingdom is also the nominal Church, though the word nominal does not sufficiently express the truth."

This passage demands a few remarks. The writer calls that "a less glorious title," which represents the whole body of spiritual life in union with Christ, than that which represents only a body of persons simply called after Christ's name. He does not apprehend the meaning of the term "kingdom of heaven," as used to designate the nominal kingdom, or, he would not thus unfavourably contrast the Church. Can that be less glorious into which an enemy cannot enter, than that into which an enemy doth enter, and where he sows the seeds of rank and noxious weeds? How little must this writer have considered the subject of the Church. He looks upon her to be that which the past ages have presented to the gaze of the world, as the Church; and seeing the picture which is presented, he has no scruples in giving her a less glorious title than that which appertains wholly to an earthly kingdom. He does not understand the true import of the words "My kingdom is not of this world;" and, consequently, he has transposed the kingdom of this world into the position of the kingdom not of this world. What a confusion of things must necessarily reign in the minds of

Churchmen. They do not hesitate to claim for the Church such as they exhibit it to be, the very body of Christ, bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh,* and yet they think this body less ennobled than that body which receives within it many members of the seed of the Evil One. Thus, to depress the Church is not common among Churchmen. They usually represent the Church in very lofty characters.

With regard to the nominal kingdom being the nominal Church, he perceives that what expresses the one does not express the other. And why? Because nominal is not the word to be applied to the Church. The word properly expresses the kingdom composed of members who bear Christ's name; but it does not express the Church whose members are more than allied by name. He knows, or should know full well, that the Church is not simply in nominal, but in real, union.

Like the term kingdom of heaven, so the word Church has been employed in the Scriptures to mean two things. They each have had two meanings, and out of this fact have arisen many of the confused notions about the Church.

I have been attempting to show what is its meaning when it describes the body of which Christ is the head—the Church "without spot or blemish." In the other sense it is used to designate a congregation or community of persons, as the Church "in the house of Nymphas,"—"the Church of God which is at Corinth,"—"the Church of Sardis,"—"the Church of Philadelphia," &c., &c., and as when St. Paul writes, "the care of all the Churches." That these Churches had much evil in them is proof that they did not form parts of the body of the Church. They simply designate bodies of persons who professed christianity, and were baptized in God's name. Churches are properly nominally christian, and make up in the aggregate the nominal kingdom.

Arising out of the indefinite use of the word Church, men have confounded these Churches with the Church. Some divines

* See the Bishop of Exeter's Declaration.

say that each Church that can trace a ministry with Apostolic descent, is a branch of the Church. They say that the Lord established a visible Church by and through the Apostles, and that every Church, having Apostolic order, and showing Apostolic succession, is a branch of the Church.

If what I have stated with regard to the Church be truths, how can the visible communities called Churches, be branches of the Church. They are all more or less impure; whereas the Church is, in every part of the New Testament, held to be pure. How can impure parts make up a pure whole?

Our Lord declared the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church. If many of the Churches, called by some branches of the Church, have been swept away, and we know they have, then this declaration appears to be stultified. The Churches in Asia doubtless traced a ministry in direct descent from the Apostles, yet it did not save them. They were swept away. If they were parts of the Church and they were destroyed, then I think, it must be admitted that the gates of hell did prevail against the Church. If parts be mutilated and destroyed, surely it will not be said the whole is intact. Christ promised to be with His Church to the end of the world. If Christ had been with the Asiatic Churches who could have been against them? He was not with them and they fell. Could he be with His Church and yet be absent from parts? To assert that he could would be to deny either His faithfulness or His power. That He was not with these Churches is proof that they did not belong to His Church;—that they were not fractions of an integral. It may be they had among them members of the Church, but as communities they were not branches, they were not parts of a whole. Of these, it is impossible to say they had not their origin from the Apostles. Apostolic descent, in the sense used by divines, did not, and therefore does not, insure incorporation with the Church.

In the Apostolic age there was an undoubted visible

community, the Church, men chosen out of the world in intimate communion with their Lord and Master. And when St. Paul says "I persecuted the Church," no doubt a visible known body constituted the Church. They were the chosen faithful ones, of whom the Apostles were chief. Connected with these faithful ones, were communities called Churches, having mixed good and bad. Churches continued to be visible, but the Church fled into the wilderness and became invisible (Rev. xii. 6). The Church will again become visible, but in a form different from the ecclesiastical Church. The ecclesiastical is the false usurping the position of the true. The true will reign when the ecclesiastical is cast down (Rev. xviii. 8; Rev. xx. 4; Dan. vii. 27). When St. Paul persecuted the Church he persecuted the faithful (Acts xxii. 10). And if it be contended that the words "persecuted the Church," mean of a visible organized corporate body, such as the ecclesiastical Church presents, then, with equal truth, may it be said, the words in the Revelation which apply to the persecuted saints or concealed Church, mean an ecclesiastical corporate body (Rev. xiii. 7); whereas they mean just the reverse, they proclaim the persecution of the mystical body by the ecclesiastical body.

To separate the Church from the communities called Churches, is important. If the several Epistles in the New Testament be examined, it will be found that, when the Church is described, the addresses are "to the saints and faithful." When St. Paul writes to the Church at Ephesus, it will be found that he addresses "the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus," and having described the Church as the body of Christ, and that it is a temple built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, he tells these saints and faithful that they also are builded together with them "for an habitation of God through the Spirit." That the greater part of the Ephesian Church were members of the Church, that is, that the greater part were of the saints and faithful, we may learn from the

Revelation. This Church was one of the seven Asiatic, and is described as at first being very pure and faithful, but as having afterward fallen, and it is admonished in these words: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." The Apostolic Ephesian Church was composed of "the saints and faithful."

Now, if we look into another epistle, we shall find the address is not to the saints and faithful. I refer to the Epistle to the Galatians, and whom Paul calls "foolish Galatians." He writes to these "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him (that is Paul) that called you unto the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." The address at the opening of the Epistle is not to the saints and faithful, but "unto the Churches of Galatia." He does not describe the members of these Churches as constituting the Church. Far from it. The whole Epistle is desponding and deprecatory. And this, not because they were not well-affected towards Paul (iv. 15), but because they had not received the truth, and were not become members of Christ's body (iv. 19). Now, these Churches received Apostolic appointment, and by it became Churches of Galatia, but this did not constitute them branches of the Church. And thus St. Paul does not address them in any way as belonging to the Church.

St. Paul marks by his language the difference between a Church and the Church. When addressing a Church, or speaking of a Church, the language is "unto the Church of the Thessalonians." "Now ye Philippians know also that, in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, *no Church* communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only" (Phil. iv. 15). In these instances it is plain to perceive that he is speaking of congregations of men professing christianity. As in the Revalation, it is equally plain, from the addresses to the Asiatic Churches that mere congrega-

tions or national Churches are addressed. It is very different when there arise occasions to speak of the Church as the body of Christ, as in Ephes. 1. 23; Ephes. v. 29—33; 1 Cor. xii. 27; Rom. xii. 5; Col. 1. 18—24.

The word Church having been employed to mean two things, it is very needful, when used, to ascertain by the context what is the meaning intended. The very fact of being so used will render some passages suspicious. A word employed with a twofold meaning will necessarily give occasions for doubtful interpretations.

In Acts xi, where we have the relation of a great accession of numbers to the infant Church, and in which relation we find it stated that "the Lord added to the Church daily," and from this it may be inferred, that the whole body of converts were added to the Church, and of whom it is probable some were not faithful. This may be inferred; but it may not be declared. The language of Scripture does not declare it. The language is "the Lord added to the Church such as should *be saved;*" and these were such as "*believed*" and "continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." That is to say, that faithful ones in Christ were being added to the Church daily.

Perhaps its meaning is most open to doubt when used by St. Paul to the Corinthians. He was describing the unity of, and yet diversity of gifts in the Church, and he writes "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor. xii. 27). He had before this been greatly reproving and admonishing the Corinthian converts, and it is evident that there were among them many evil men. This would seem to show that the Church on earth admitted bad members.

The address at the opening of the Epistle is "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and ours."

The Corinthian, like every young Church raised out of a heathen people, was composed of persons very ignorant of the divine laws. St. Paul, therefore, writes "And I brethren could speak not unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (Chap. iii. 1). But though "yet carnal" they were many of them the chosen and elect people of God. And these were warned that as they were the temple of God, which is declared to be holy, all were to keep themselves from defiling the temple of God, for such an one as defiled the temple, God would destroy (iii. 15—17). And in the 5th chapter St. Paul instructs them not to company with any man that is "*called a brother,*" who is a "fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." And then, observe the remarkable words which follow, "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." These notorious sinners are declared to be without, and all such the true body was to put away from them. They were not to judge them, but to put them away, and let God judge them. We must recollect that it is wilful sin which offendeth. "He that knoweth God's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes." Now, these early gentile converts were ignorant of the christian laws, and they were seeking a knowledge of them. If they, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, did err, they erred in ignorance. Some, who seemed to be of them, probably erred from wilfulness; but I am referring to those who really were the chosen of God, and members of Christ's body, though only weak members (1 Cor. xii. 22). The openly wicked did not, while in that state, belong to the Church, they could "not inherit the kingdom of God." St. Paul, in the 6th Chapter, explains this to them, and declares "Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our

God." And then, to mark the true character of the Church, after having advised their future conduct, he says, "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."

In the 12th Chapter, St. Paul describes the operation of the Holy Spirit in building up the Church. He tells the Corinthians there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit: differences of administration but the same Lord. To one is given wisdom; to another knowledge; to another faith; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits, &c., &c. "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Though they have diversities of gifts, yet all are baptized by the one Spirit unto the one body. These, the justified, and the "called to be saints," are "members in particular," and are of "the body of Christ." And then we have a declaration of the Church, "first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

When we enter upon the subject of priesthood, or of a ministry, these constitutents of the Church will have to be considered, as well as some texts, such as "Tell it unto the Church." "Obey them that have the rule over you," &c.

Of the doubtful passages of scripture wherein the word Church is used, perhaps that in 1 Tim. iii. 15, may be cited as open to controversy. The Church of the living God is here declared to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." And in the Chapter wherein this declaration is made, a description is given of the kind of persons bishops and deacons should be. It would, therefore, seem that, "the house of God," said to be the Church, is the house with whom bishops and deacons are allied: that it is the Church of the past, having an ecclesiastical polity. When we come to consider the subject of the ministry, we shall perhaps better understand who are the bishops and deacons here meant. It will be observed that, the bishops and deacons mentioned are men who desire office, and it is required that they

should be "blameless." They are not men thrust into office, but such as desire the "good work." They are men whose faith in Christ prompts them without an eye to "filthy lucre," to take the superintendance and care of the Church. Such men "purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Such men as these, together with all the faithful, are "the taught of the Lord." They are of those having this seal "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19). They are the vessels unto "honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

The Church, the house of God, is the temple of the Lord. It is the building which groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. To behave oneself wisely in this, is to be "builded together" with the faithful, "for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephes. ii. 21—22). This building, or temple, or Church, is "the ground and pillar of the truth." "The ground and pillar of the truth" is not the Church governed and guided by councils and decrees of ecclesiastical synods; this ecclesiastical Church has been greivously misdirected by such; but it is the Church of the living God, directed by the councils of God. It is the Church composed of the members of Christ's body, directed and guided, and governed by the Great Head. It is composed of a stream of men enlightened by God in the truth. These are spiritually united to Christ, and are taught by Him, and they belong to the Church of the living God, "the ground and pillar of the truth."

Beside this house, the immediate temple of God, there is a greater house or kingdom, "having not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour." But it is those only "to honour" who are sanctified and meet for the master's use (2 Tim. ii. 21; John xv. 5—6). This greater house is the kingdom of heaven of mixed good and bad, made up of the several denominational

and national churches, having varied ecclesiastical organizations. Not that the present ecclesiastical bodies are in harmony with Christianity. When we enter upon the subject of the promises, or, as it is termed, the keys, we shall find they do not apply in the remotest sense to an episcopally ordained body.

The purity of the Church is established upon Scripture evidence. The corrupt communities called Churches, either in Apostolic, or in after times, could not therefore make up in the aggregate the Church. It is certain that congregations of men called Churches, are made up of mixed parts, corrupt and incorrupt, and it is impossible that mixed parts of good and bad can constitute an incorrupt whole. It is equally certain that "the kingdom of heaven," composed of mixed good and bad, cannot stand as a declaration for the Church.

If it be permitted to call the "kingdom of heaven" of good and bad, the militant Church, it will be found, when we come to examine into the subject, that the promises of our Lord do not belong to such mixed body. They belong only to the good, the just made perfect by union with Christ, the members of His body, the Church.

That this body is irrespective of a clergy order, we shall perceive when we reflect upon the several truths established, and when we remember that the strength of the argument lies in the fact that purity is the great essential feature of the Church.

The Church on earth, under the present dispensation, is composed of members in intimate spiritual union with Christ.

The Holy City, new Jerusalem, into which nothing entereth that defileth, represents the Church, and is the Scripture declaration thereof, this being declared the bride of Christ, and there being but one bride, so there can be but this one Church, as the Church of the living God.

In harmony with these truths, the Old Testament prophecies, and the New Testament declarations, proclaim the members as all "taught of the Lord," and all "cleansed by the Word,"

and the Church, as a whole, pure and holy, "without spot or blemish."

These being established truths, it is apparent that an ecclesiastical corporation does not constitute the Church. Ecclesiastics are of every varied character—some notoriously not in union with Christ. If these parts be not in union the whole cannot be in union. Some parts are in union, but these do not give union to the dissevered parts—those parts which have only connection or nominal union. Though members of the kingdom, and imperfect branches of the vine, yet as they "abide not in Christ, they are cast forth as withered branches" (John xv. 6). They form no part of Christ's body. They are not members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, as described (John xvii. 8—26; Ephes. 1. 23; Ephes. v. 30). They do not therefore belong to the Church. That this is so is certain. Though ordained ministers of Christ, they belong not to the Church. Ordination has not given such men admission. As it failed with these it is not certain in its operations. As it does not in some instances, admit to the Church, it may be that it does not in any instance, that it is not, in any way concerned as the agency to admit. This will be a subject of future enquiry. At present let it suffice to declare that no mention is made of the presence of a clergy order within the holy city. Rather it declares against such an order. St. John writes, "and I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, are the temple of it" (Rev. xxi. 22). There are in the Church "Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (1 Cor. xii. 28). These several constituents belong to the Church, and episcopal ordination gives a title to a style as some of these, but it does not give admission to the Church. Some of the ordained belong, and some belong not to the Church. Ordination gives a title to teach in the kingdom or Churches, but this whole body of teachers are not those intended as belonging to the Church. The teachers and governors

intended are those "taught of the Lord." Of these many have received no ecclesiastical ordination. This remark especially regards teachers. And "governments," we shall find, when we investigate the subject, are different from the governments the past has exhibited in Christendom. Governments there are in the Church, but they are not ecclesiastical governments. Though invisible as a whole, yet the Church is an active, industrial, influential body, and comprehends within it "governments."

I have been all along writing of "the Church of the living God," and this is the only Church in union with God. I am not arguing that Churches belong not to God, that they have no acceptance, or no connection with God. I do say, as Churches, they have no intimate union with God, and the promises belong not to them. All the Churches have connection, with more or less approval. All the Churches of Christ are God's Churches, and belong to God's kingdom. They make up in the aggregate "the kingdom of heaven" of mixed good and bad.. Individually not one is, nor collectively are they all, the Church—"the body of Christ"—"the ground and pillar of the truth"—"the Church of the living God." The Churches though not the Church, yet contain within them the Church, and this inner body is not an inert, but an active, influential body.

About the Holy Catholic Church, of which we express our belief when we say the Creed, different minds think differently. The Romanist, when he says it, is intending to express a belief in the Roman Catholic Church—the Episcopalian, in the several Churches episcopally governed—some men intend thereby to express a belief in the great body of Universal Christendom—others, and these are a few, express a belief in the Holy Church, the elect and chosen body in spiritual union with Christ.

Immense confusion reigns over this subject, men of the same sect thinking differently about it. In the Church of England, for instance, some, as the Tractarians, think that without Apostolic order and succession, as it is called, there is no connection with the

Catholic Church; others believe the Holy Catholic Church to consist in Universal Christendom. Bishop Pearson thus writes at page 398, in his work on the Creed. "Now, as several Churches are reduced to the denomination of one Church, in relation to the single governor of those many Churches, so all the Churches of all cities, and all nations of the world, may be reduced to the same single denomination in relation to One Supreme Governor of them all, and that one Governor is Christ the bishop of our souls. Wherefore the Apostle, speaking of that in which all Churches do agree, comprehendeth them all under the same appellation of one Church; and, therefore, often by the name of the Church, are understood *all christians whatsoever* belonging to any of the Churches dispersed through the distant and divided parts of the world. For the single persons professing faith in Christ, are members of the particular Churches in which they live, and all those particular Churches are members of the general and universal Church, which is one by unity of aggregation; and this is the Church in the creed which we believe, and which is in other creeds expressly termed *one, I believe in one Holy Catholic Church.*" While the diversity of opinion is pointed out, it is right to observe, that bishop Pearson says that, "there is no Church where there is no order, no ministry." But then he recognises a difference of order, for he says, "where the same order and ministry is, there is the same Church." Hence it is inferred that Churches are made up of different orders and different ministries, but the Churches in the aggregate constitute the Catholic Church.

Bishop Pearson states, that the ancient profession was in the "Holy Church," and afterward was added the "Catholic" (page 393). These two "affections," as Pearson calls them, of "sanctity and universality," the one is "attributed unto it by the Apostles, the other by the Fathers of the Church: by the first, the Church is denominated Holy, by the second, Catholic" (page 403). The universality of the Church, in which this writer as

well as others * believe, we may dismiss as deserving very little attention. The Fathers erred in promulgating it. There is no authority for it in Scripture, and Bishop Pearson, when he is describing the Catholic Church, in the margin refers to those texts of scripture which describe the Holy Church. And these texts, so far from comprehending all Christendom, are limited in their meaning to the spiritual body in close union with Christ, as has been shown.

With regard to the Holy Church, Bishop Pearson is compelled to acknowledge the particular Church on earth, which is, within as it were, the external and visible Christian body. The holiness of the Universal Church he thinks to consist only in sound; that it is holy "as a vocation;" that all who profess faith in Christ are thereby engaged to holiness of life;" in respect of this obligation, the whole Church may be termed holy." "But," he writes in the next clause, "the Apostle hath also delivered another kind of holiness which cannot belong unto the Church, taken in so great a latitude." He then goes on to describe, and to show from the Scriptures, the inner body or the true Church—the Church of which "it may be fully and properly affirmed, that the Church is holy" (page 405).

Archbishop Potter describes the Church as a universal society, and as an outward and visible society. Nothing more need be urged against the first opinion. Let us examine and see whether the latter opinion is correct, whether the Church is a visible society, that is, a visible corporate body. Let it be distinctly understood that I do not advocate the invisibility of individual members. Only as a whole do I assert that they cannot be a visible corporate body.

Though throughout I have argued that the Church, as a body, is visible only to God, yet as this body has a most important part to bear on the theatre of this earth, so the individuals concerned must necessarily be visible. The saints of the most High shall

* "It is a universal society."—*Potter on Church Government.*

possess the kingdom when the harlot of scripture is overthrown (Dan. vii. 21—27). To the faithful the promises are given, and they were not made to be unpractical. God knows the members of His Church individually and collectively. Men shall know them individually, with an approximation to the truth. They cannot know them certainly, but as men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, so they will not think of finding holy men following unholy lives. Christian men not bearing fruits consistent with a Christian life, will not be easily mistaken for members of Christ's body (Matt. vii. 15—20).

Individually, members of the Church are, and will be yet more, distinctly known. But is the Church a visible, corporate, ecclesiastically-governed society? The Archbishop Potter is so certain it is an outward visible society, that he writes at page 16, "There cannot be produced one passage in the whole New Testament, where it signifies any but an *outward and visible congregation.*" Is this declaration correct? Let us enquire into the matter. And let us not mistake what the Archbishop means.

"First.—It is not a mere *voluntary* society, but one whereof men are obliged to be members.

Secondly.—It is a *spiritual* society.

Thirdly.—It is also an *outward* and *visible* society.

Fourthly.—It is an *universal* society."

And before making these declarations he compares the Christian with the Hebrew Church, and says "if the Church of the Jews were a society, of which there is no doubt, then the Christian Church is a society too, since it is not a new Church, but only the Jewish Church perfected and enlarged." In fact, these opinions of Archbishop Potter are a fair sample of the opinions of divines generally. They all concur in confounding the outward and visible kingdom of mixed good and evil with the Church. And thus the Archbishop does not hesitate to apply to the general body of Christians the texts which have reference alone to the perfected Church. He begins by a misapplication of

the language of Moses, and says the Jews were called a "peculiar treasure," "a kingdom of priests," "a holy nation," referring to Exod. xix. 5—6; and he does not perceive that this language is wholly prophetic of the future. He does not perceive that it conveys a promise that, *if the Jews will obey God's voice indeed, then*, they shall be "a peculiar treasure," a kingdom of priests," and "a holy nation." But they did not obey; it was reserved for a people to be hereafter "taught of the Lord," and made "righteous thereby,"* to obey, and thus to become a nation of priests.† Neither he or other divines have perceived the perfected character of the Church on earth, under the new covenant, but have applied the passages which declare it either to the Church in heaven triumphant, or else they have weakened the force of the words, by ascribing to them a meaning which in some instances, under the first covenant they bear, that is, that they apply to the vocation, or calling, as God's nominal people.

With respect to the Archbishop's declaration, that not "one passage can be produced in the whole New Testament where it signifies any but an outward and visible society," the many texts of Scripture I have adduced to show the spiritual union of the Church with Christ, plainly do not mean a visible society, in the sense intended by the archbishop. To pass over the incongruity of declaring that to be a purely *spiritual society* and yet *visible*, let us look into the texts which proclaim the Church to be the very body of Christ. No doubt, in many places in the New Testament, the word Church means a visible body or congregation of men. It has been so used. But when the Church as the bride is meant, the word does not mean the whole visible body of Christians. I refer my readers to Ephes. 1. 23; Rom. xii.; 1 Cor. xii. In this latter chapter we see the members of the Church are baptized by one spirit into one body.

Now that the spirit does not uniformly baptize all Christians,

* Jer. xxxi. 34. Isa. liv. 13—17. Heb. viii. 11—12.

† 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. i. 6.

our Lord's language plainly shows (John iii. 8). To suppose that the spirit did baptize all would be to render ridiculous the whole discourse, for if it were so, then there could be no distinction. It would not be needful to say "Except a man be born again," but the language probably would be, all men being born again of water, and therefore of the spirit, shall enter into the kingdom of God. We have shown also that the Church is described as perfect, and the whole visible body, as a whole, is imperfect, so the descriptions of the Church cannot mean to include the whole visible society. St. Paul explains this most clearly in the 1st Chapter to the Colossians, only those who "continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and not moved away from the hope of the Gospel," are they that are presented "holy and unblameable, and unreproveable." Such only are members of the body, the Church, "every man being perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 18—29). "The saints and faithful brethren" are "delivered from the power of darkness," and "translated into the true kingdom of Christ" (verses 1, and 12, 13). In this passage of the New Testament it is plain that the Archbishop's declaration meets with a denial. The Church herein mentioned, composed of the members of Christ's body, and made perfect, and partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, cannot be a body visible as a whole to man. Who shall declare who alone are the saints and faithful? This being impossible to man, so the whole body, the Church on earth, must be invisible to man.

That the Church is not universal every part of the scriptures prove. The Church is chosen out of the world (John xvii. 14—16). They are the faithful as we have seen. And that they are the selected few our Lord declared, that no man "can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." And that our Lord was here referring to the exclusive and perfected Church on earth, He quotes the language of the prophets of old, "and they shall be all taught of the Lord." In this discourse our Lord shows the intimate union that subsists

between Him and His peculiar people, the Church. He employs language drawn from nature, descriptive of flesh and blood union; but that this is not what is meant he declares—"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak with you *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." That these words would be received only by part, he declared that some would believe not, and that those by whom they were not received had "no life in them" (John vi. 44—65), no union with Christ, and, therefore, belong not to the Church.

Wherever the intimate union with Christ is spoken of, it has reference to "the saints and faithful." They are those "taught of God." They are those drawn to Christ by the Father or Spirit of God, and gathered together in one, even in Christ. They are those made "clean through the Word" (John xv. 3; Ephes. v. 26). They are those who "abide in Christ" (John xv. 4). They are those who "are sanctified through the truth" (John xvii. 19). And our Lord thus speaks of them—"That they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us, that *the world may believe* that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me *I have given them;* that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in me, *that they may be made perfect in one*" (John xvii. 21—23). The body thus perfected, intimately united to Christ, is His Church.

This body, though not visible as a whole, is not an intangible reality. The members exist on earth. Though not of the world, they are in the world (John xvii. 14—16).

We have seen from ample Scripture testimony that the Church is a body of persons on earth in intimate spiritual union with Christ. That by reason of this union the members are held to be sinless (1 John iii), and the Church, as a body, is stated to be "holy, and without blemish." Now, if any man is not thus spiritually allied, it matters not though he be a bishop, yet he is not of the Church. If the Spirit of God dwell not in him—if

he have not the Spirit of Christ, *he is none of His* (Rom. viii. 9). Ordination has not given him access. Only "as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God" (ver. 14). Only such are "heirs of God, and *joint heirs with Christ.*" If the Spirit bear not witness with our spirit, then are we not children, if not children then not heirs (ver. 16). Then, have we no union with Christ, we are not members of His body—the Church.

If ordination does not invariably convey the Holy Spirit, so that an union with Christ is effected, then ordination is inoperative, and is not the appointed means of introduction to the Church. It is an appointed means to the ministry. But the ministry of Churches is not necessarily a part of the Church. If beside ordination there has not been the baptism of the Spirit, then is there no union with Christ. Such unbaptized persons *are none of His.* They belong to the whole visible or nominal kingdom, but they belong not to the Church. Only those chosen of God belong to this body (Rom. viii. 26—39).

The Church then is a body irrespective of a clergy order.

To sum up the argument. The Church on earth is a body of persons in spiritual union with Christ. By reason of this union they are held to be sinless, their righteousness is of the Lord.* The Church is therefore declared to be holy, "without spot or blemish." The Holy City, New Jerusalem, is a figure to represent the Church, and in conformity with the declarations of Scripture with regard to the Church, nothing entereth herein that defileth. The term "kingdom of heaven," representing a community of mixed good and bad, does not mean the Church. The term has two meanings, one to represent the nominal kingdom, the other to represent the true kingdom. The one including all called by Christ's name, the other composed only of true believers—"the saints and faithful," and these compose the Church. The word Church in Scripture has two meanings, one

* Isa. liv. 17. Ibid lx. 21. Ibid. lii. 1. Rev. xxi. 27. Joel iii. 17. John xvii. 23. 1 John iii. 6. Ephes. v. 26, 27.

to represent a congregation or body of persons nominally Christian, the other to represent the body of persons in spiritual union with Christ. There is but one Church in union, and this being perfect, Churches composed of good and bad cannot in the aggregate be the Church. Imperfect parts cannot make a perfect whole. The Church is not a visible, ecclesiastical, corporate body, but is composed only of the faithful spiritually allied to Christ. These are spiritually baptized into the one body. Neither ordination or baptism by water, give access to this body, as we shall presently prove. It has been already proved that those only who abide in Christ by a heart or spirit belief, belong to the Church. The covenant, under the Hebrew dispensation, was an imperfect covenant. The covenant, under the Christian, is a perfect covenant. All included within this covenant are spiritually baptized, and "taught of the Lord." The Church is built upon a rock, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against her. She belongs to a kingdom above the reach of Satan. With Churches he does prevail. They are erring and fallible, and subject to overthrow. They arise and depart, and are seen no more: the Church remains. The purity of the Church being established, and it being beyond dispute that many ecclesiastics have not the purity consequent upon union with Christ, it follows that such belong not to the Church. Ordination has not given to these admission to the Church. As it failed to do so with these, it is not a certain agency to admit to the Church. If some ecclesiastics are within the Church, and it is undoubted there are many, ordination did not admit them there, but Spirit baptism, this being the only agency to admit. The Church is consequently a spiritual body, in union with Christ, irrespective of a clergy order, that is, that it is a body spiritually united, and independent of an ecclesiastical organization, as stated in the preceding number.

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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

(No. IV.)

PRIESTHOOD.

BY JAMES BIDEN,

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IN THE NOMINAL, OR CATHOLIC, KINGDOM ARE RULERS AND TEACHERS, BUT NOT ECCLESIASTICS. IN THE TRUE KINGDOM, OR THE CHURCH, IS UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD.

It is maintained by the Clergy Church, that an Ecclesiastical Church was established by Christ, founded upon the Apostles, and that to the Apostles was given power to perpetuate their order, and so maintain an endless line of ecclesiastics. The principle of perpetuity is the foundation principle of the Clergy Church. And laying this down as a foundation, and this foundation, as we shall show, being false, the whole scheme being adverse to Christianity, divines build upon it a superstructure of falsehood. They claim to themselves thereby, as a separate body, a position and privileges which belong not to them. With their privileges, as claimed from the promises of Christ, we are not now concerned. These form the subject of a future paper. In this we are to consider the position of rulers and teachers, and the principles which govern their election. The inquiry will involve the leading principles; and the question to be determined will be, whether a mediating sacramental priesthood as a separate body, or rulers and teachers chosen out of the general body, be most consonant to Christianity.

Let us fairly state the matter in dispute. Divines affirm that our Lord established an Ecclesiastical Church, creating by the hands of the Apostles an order of men, called the clergy, as a separate body, to govern the Church, to perpetuate their order, to

administer all rites, to absolve from sin, and to affix guilt or modify punishment.

In opposition to this, we affirm that Christ instituted no such Church, that such a scheme is opposed to the Gospel, and that Christ established a Church wherein all members have free access to Him, who alone is their Mediator and their Judge; and that in virtue of union with Him they are "priests and kings," and that an order of men, not as a separate class, but chosen by and out of the people should be rulers and teachers. Christians are brethren, and a separation of the body into two distinct classes of clergy and laity is adverse to Christianity.

Before we proceed to discuss this subject, let us be reminded of the two great leading truths before established.

1. The harlot of Scripture is not atheistic anarchy, but a body in intimate connection with Christianity. It is a false body representing itself to be the true. The Church is the spouse of Christ, and it is that system embodied which claims to be the spouse, and is not. It is the false ecclesiastical system.

2. The Church is a body of persons in spiritual union with Christ, irrespective of a clergy order, or not having an ecclesiastical organisation.

These two truths are established, we think, beyond dispute, and they go far, or quite, to negative the claims of the ecclesiastical body, or the Clergy Church. But let us further examine into the arguments used by divines to favour their opinions, and see whether they are borne out in their assertions, and whether we cannot, by investigating the Scriptures, arrive at certain conclusions opposite to theirs, and whether church life is not something very different to that which a Clergy Church presents.

That divines themselves must have some suspicion of their doubtful position, is apparent from the laboured way in which they set about to establish their claims to rule. And what has occasioned them the difficulty, is the fact that the Church is superior to, and above, ecclesiastical government. Consequently,

no definite rules for government were given. To promulgate the Gospel, certain machinery was needful, and this machinery was developed in the proceedings of the Apostles and first Christians, and upon this machinery was ultimately built, by erring hands, an ecclesiastical edifice. This machinery was most simple. The Apostles and others went into cities and preached the good tidings, and having collected some believers, out of their number one as an elder was ordained, whose office was to regulate the general affairs. The office did not impose the necessity of preaching. Some elders did preach, some did not (1 Tim v. 17). With the elder were deacons, whose office was more especially to attend to the distributions when Christians had all things common (Acts vi. 1—6). In each small community, or Church, was an elder, or bishop, or overseer (these terms being synonymous) and deacons, (Phil. i. 1; Titus i. 5; Acts xx. 28). Elders and deacons preached or not as they were moved, or any one of the brethren prayed and preached (1 Cor. xiv.). Such was primitive Christianity. How unlike that defined order of things which the Hebrew polity presents. And how unlike that which the ecclesiastical Church presents. This absence of defined order in early Christianity is the great difficulty with divines, and an apparent authority for ecclesiastical rule so feeble, indeed, there being no authority, that they are compelled to look for it in an age after the Apostolic. In the primitive age the distinction between clergy and laity did not exist. Divines look, therefore, to the Fathers, and as Christianity soon had foisted upon it old notions of priestcraft, so among these they find authority for metropolitans, bishops, presbyters, and deacons, successive grades of ecclesiastical orders. But even among the Fathers are met adverse opinions to a clergy rule, but they are passed by as unimportant, or treated as the wild opinions of misguided men.*

* (A.D. 423.) "Not long after flourished Theodoret, in the beginning of the fifth century, who makes the name of bishop and presbyter to have been synonymous terms in the Apostolic age; but then he w

We are not now going to argue against this or that form of church government. The principal end in view, at present, is to

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have those of the chief order to have been called Apostles. The same persons," says he, "were anciently called bishops and presbyters; and they whom we now call bishops were then called Apostles. But, in process of time, the name of Apostles was appropriated to them who were Apostles in the strict sense; and the rest, who had formerly the name of Apostles, were styled bishops. In this sense Epaphroditus is called the Apostle of the Philippians; Titus was the Apostle of the Cretians, and Timothy of Asia."

"From these testimonies, with many others easy to be produced, it appears that *in the next ages after the Roman Emperors* professed the Christian religion, the distinction of the clergy and the laity, and of bishops from the lower orders of clergymen, were constantly reckoned to be of Divine institution, and derived from the Apostles down to that time." (This is tantamount to a confession that previously to the profession of Christianity by the Roman Emperors much dispute arose upon the subject of priesthood. Tertullian advocated the existence of a church though they were all layman.) "Indeed, in Tertullian's time there were some who allowed layman to execute all the functions of the sacerdotal office. 'Their ordinations,' says he, 'are without distinction, mutable, and unfixed. . . . One is a bishop to-day, another to-morrow; to-day he is a deacon, who to-morrow is a reader; to-day is a presbyter, who to morrow is a layman. For they commit the sacerdotal functions to laymen.'"

But, then, what sort of principles were these men of? If we may take the same author's account of them, they were such as allowed, not laymen only, but even women, contrary to St. Paul's express command, to teach in their public assemblies, and (as he supposes) to baptise (p. 127—129).

Potter charges these early Christians, who thus disregarded an ecclesiastical order, as heretics, and he thinks "it is strange that St. Jerome's conjecture about the original of episcopacy should prejudice any considering man against the divine institution of it." And, again, at p. 175, upon the subject of baptism, he recurs to Tertullian. He writes, "And if Tertullian may be credited, 'laymen have power to baptise, which yet for the sake of order, they ought only to use in cases of necessity.'" Indeed, his judgment ought less to be regarded, because he seems to give layman *an inherent power of baptism*, which naturally follows from that absurd notion of his which was examined in the last chapter, "that all Christians were originally priests, and are only prohibited from exercising the sacerdotal office for the sake of order."—*Potter's Church Government.*

show that government does not rest with an ecclesiastical body, and that an order of men is intended to be employed to propagate the Gospel, properly termed teachers. Hereafter, in a future number, will be given what is conceived to be the Gospel scheme for government. Not that an inflexible rule is to be observed. Christianity as a polity has no precise and definite form given to it. Some latitude in this respect it would seem is permitted, that the form of church government may adapt itself to the prevailing genius or institutions of a people. Mosheim thus writes upon this subject: "Neither Christ himself, nor his holy Apostles, have commanded anything clearly, or expressly, concerning the external form of the Church, and the precise method according to which it should be governed. From this we may infer, that the regulation of this was, in some measure, to be accommodated to the time, and left to the wisdom and prudence of the chief rulers, both of the state and of the Church. If, however, it is true, that the Apostles acted by divine inspiration, and in conformity with the commands of their blessed Master (and this no Christian can call in question), then it follows, that that form of government which the primitive churches borrowed

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Potter thinks Tertullian's "*absurd notion!*" that all Christians are priests, as derived from the passages of Scripture, "where Christ is said to have made us kings and priests, is a manifest allusion to a passage in the Old Testament, where God promised the Jews, that if they would obey His voice, and keep His covenant, they should be to Him 'a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.' So that the Jews were all priests, that is, set apart and dedicated to the service of God, or whatever else the name of priests implies in this place, as well as Christians; and it can no more be hence inferred, that all Christians are priests in the strict sense of this name, and authorised to administer the sacraments, than that all the Jews were invested with the sacerdotal office, and allowed to offer sacrifices; which none of them, except the family of Aaron, not even their kings, ever presumed to do without incurring most heavy and exemplary punishments" (p. 114).

I make this last extract from *Potter* that the basis of his reasoning may be fairly before my readers.

from that of *Jerusalem*, the first Christian assembly established by the Apostles themselves, must be esteemed as of divine institution. But from this it would be wrong to conclude that such a form is immutable, and ought to be invariably observed; for this a great variety of events may render impossible. In those early times, every Christian Church consisted of the *people*, their *leaders*, and the *ministers* or *deacons*; and these, indeed, belong essentially to every religious society. The people were, undoubtedly, the first in authority; for the Apostles shewed, by their own example, that nothing of moment was to be carried on or determined without the consent of the assembly, and such a method of proceeding was both prudent and necessary in those critical times."—*Mosheim*, Cent. 1, chap. 11.

The early type, or Apostolical rule, of government, was very simple as adapted to the infant state of Christianity. The distinction of the clergy and the laity did not then obtain. It gradually changed and progressed to the ancient sacerdotal rule, until a perfect hierarchy was maintained. The Scriptures attest its first simple form; and it is only to take up Milner, or Mosheim, or Hooker, and even Potter, and its progress to sacerdotalism comes out. The early type having been formed, not by, but under, inspiration, that is, the Church being under inspiration, it is the proper form for church rule, and a future state of society will arise when most probably it will be returned to. The relation which we have in the New Testament of Apostolic Christianity shows that equality was the rule—government the exception. The first act done by the Apostles was not by command of God, as we find all acts were under the Hebrew polity, but arose out of an emergency. In this emergency the whole body of disciples are appealed to; "the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them," and were told to look out among them "men of honest report." The choice was with the whole body of the people (Acts vi. 2). The principle of equality we find observed when the question arose about circumcision.

The brethren, with the Apostles and elders, "send greeting unto *the brethren*" (Acts xv. 23). This is the rule. The exceptions are in the early formation and general guidance of the several churches by the Apostles and their immediate deputies. These inspired men directed, exhorted, rebuked, and taught. In the first formation of churches, the natural order of things required that he who formed a church should watch over it. But none of them so employed evinced a disposition "to lord it over God's heritage." Far from it; the very opposite is shown as exhibited in the conduct and abstinence of Paul (Acts xx. 33, 34). Mosheim, writing of the first century, says, "There reigned among the members of the Christian Church, however distinguished they were by worldly rank and titles, not only an amiable harmony, but also a perfect equality." And in reference to the authority being exercised by, and residing in, the general body, he writes, "It was, therefore, the assembly of the people which chose their own rulers and teachers, or received them by a free and authoritative consent when recommended by others." The fact of having all things common is proof of the principle of equality.

The principle of government resides with the people. Government may be modified by circumstances. It is essentially needful that there should be a body of instructors. The great end and object is to teach. A machinery is needful for this purpose. The old adage, that "what is everybody's business is nobody's," applies here. A work to be properly done must have appointed persons to do it. The management and order of this appointment is left to circumstances. The principle of equality among Christians, as a basis for government, is not left to circumstances. This is fundamental. It is taught by our Lord (Luke xxii. 24—26), and was observed in Apostolic practice.

With regard to priesthood, it will be well to define what is meant to be conveyed by the term. In the Hebrew dispensation, the priests only were permitted to approach unto God. The people were to present their offerings through the priests. By

priesthood, we mean personal communion with God. Names are only important as they convey correct ideas of things. It matters little what persons holding office are called, if the name do not misrepresent the office, and mislead, and help to create claims which have no just foundation. Priest, as applied to a minister or teacher, has decidedly this effect, and it is, therefore, important that the office should be properly designated. Priest as applied to a simple minister is erroneous. I say simple—I mean as derived only from ordination, which gives a title under the present system to minister. Hooker perceived the false application of the term priest. He writes thus, "Wherefore to pass by the name, let them use what dialect they will, whether we call it a priesthood, a presbytership, or a ministry, it skilleth not; although, in truth, the word presbyter doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable, than priest, with *the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ.*" He defines presbyter to mean "a fatherly guide." This is consonant to Scripture. The Gospel contemplates a state of society when not only peace shall reign, but when "brother shall not go to law with brother." And presbyters, or fatherly guides will have much influence. When the Gospel scheme is carried out, the elders are a most influential body. But elders are not ecclesiastics. False church principles represent the Church to be based upon an ecclesiastical order, being derived by succession from the Apostles, constituting one universal Apostolic Church, having a priesthood as a sacramental, mediating, absolving body, in whom resides the power to rule. This we, with many others, think is a very great mistake.

Under the old covenant, God provided a mediating priesthood, but this, as in all the appointments of the Levitical law, was a type of a better and higher state of things. Under the old covenant God could not be approached but through the medium of the appointed channel of communication. But when God Himself became the Great High Priest, He put Himself in immediate communion with His people. The office of a Levitical

priest became needless. The order of a mediating priesthood became extinct, and God now graciously condescends to accept the spiritual sacrifice of each grateful heart.*

To the improved condition of man, wherein he is brought into direct communion with his God, the sacred writers are continually referring. The whole scheme of redemption is to bring back man into recommunion. As in man's first estate, when God talked familiarly with Adam, so He permits through Christ an approach now. No man needs any other intercessor than the Great High Priest. Christ graciously says, "All ye that are weary and heavy laden, come unto me, and I will give you rest." They are invited to come direct, not, as under the Levitical law, to present a propitiatory sacrifice through the priest, but in faith to come unto Him, and He will in no wise cast out. This nearer approach to, and closer communion with, God, raising and elevating the moral and spiritual life, it is of which Ezekiel prophecies: "There was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst" (Ezek. xli. 7). The Gospel comprehends a higher development of man, so that intellectually, socially, morally, and spiritually, he shall be elevated. By sin man, as a spiritual being, was thrust out from the harmony of spiritual life with God; but, by the Gospel, he is not only invited back, but constrained by love to re-enter. The Gospel is intended to operate for good as much here as hereafter.

The promise to the Jews is intended to take effect, that "God's people shall be unto him a peculiar treasure; a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exod. xix. 5, 6). They are, therefore, declared to be "taught of the Lord, and all so taught shall "obey Him indeed." "Their sins, and their unrighteousness, will He

* Chevalier Bunsen's "Church of the Future" exhibits the truths connected with this subject in very eloquent terms.

remember no more" (Heb. viii. 11, 12). The righteousness imputed unto them as derived from fellowship with Christ has fulfilled the condition, and they are brought within the influence of the promise.

Now let us see what impression these scriptural truths make upon divines who argue in favour of a Clergy Church.

Archbishop Potter, in the opening chapter of his discourse on Church Government, applies the promise to the Jews as a people united to God, and to one another, in the same religious society. And in a similar manner he applies it to the Christian Society. He does not perceive that the promise was dependant upon a condition to be fulfilled.*

This writer appears altogether ignorant of the fact, that the first dispensation was imperfect, and foreshadowed a second in all things perfect (Heb. viii.); and so it is that he misunderstands the prophetical language. Throughout his work he teaches that

* "Neither are the members of the Church united only by love and affection, by consent of opinion, or similitude of manners, which may happen to the members of distinct societies; but they all bear the same relation to the same common head. This it is, whereby regular societies are distinguished from confused multitudes; that, whereas the latter are only locally united, and where their parts are dispersed, utterly cease to be; the former are joined under the same form of government to the same common head, by their alliance to which their several parts, how remote soever in place, do maintain a strict communion with one another. Thus the several persons, who live in the same city or kingdom, are united into one civil society; and the Jews, however dispersed, were all united to one God, and to one another, in the same religious society, having all obliged themselves, by the same covenant, to be the people of God. Whence they are called God's 'peculiar treasure,' 'a kingdom of priests,' 'a holy nation' (Exod. xix. 5, 6). And being engaged as one and the same person to Him, they are called His spouse, whence God is said to have married them, and to be their husband (Isa. liv. 5).

"In the very same manner, Christians, being separated from the world, and united to Christ by the same covenant, are called 'a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (1 Peter ii. 9). They are said to be the bride and wife of Christ, to be married to Him (Rev. xxi. 9; xxii. 17), and to be espoused to him as to one husband (Rom.

the Christian Church is based upon a polity similar to that of the Hebrew, and he concludes the 3rd chapter in these words: "From what has been said, I hope it will fully appear to every impartial reader that, in the times of the Apostles, there were three distinct orders of ministers by whom the Christian Church was governed. And here, again, as was done in the conclusion of the last chapter, we may observe how the government of the Christian Church, which is the mystical Israel, was typified in the literal Israel; the chief priest thereof, with his priests and Levites, exactly represented the Christian Apostles, presbyters, and deacons; whereby the prediction of Isaiah was accomplished, that God would declare His glory to all nations, and 'take of them for priests and Levites.*'"

The opinions here promulgated are supported by appeal to the predictions of Isaiah, to be found in the chapters referred to in the margin. Now let us examine these. Before we do so, let it be observed that Potter compares the Christian Apostles (and he is meaning ecclesiastical bishops, as we shall presently find) to the chief priest, presbyters to his priests, and deacons to Levites. Now, how very false is all this. The imperfect high priest of the Hebrew dispensation was the type of the perfect Great High Priest of the Christian. The priests of the one were the types of the priests of the other. In the imperfect dispensation, a few

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vii. 4). And I will add further, that the Jewish and Christian Churches, though they differ in outward polity, are the same in substance; the Jews believed in Christ to come, and 'drank of that spiritual rock that followed them,' and the Christians are saved by Christ already come: but both Jews and Christians are members of the same Church of Christ. Whence, St. Paul compares the Church to a tree, in which there are two sorts of branches; one, natural, which are the Jews; the other, ingrafted, which are the Christian converts from Gentilism; but both of them belong to the same stock. And, therefore, if the Church of the Jews were a society, of which there is no doubt, then the Christian Church is a society too, since it is not a new Church, but only the Jewish Church perfected and enlarged."—*Potter on Church Government.*

* Isa, lxvi. 19—21; lx. 17; lxi. 6.

were permitted to hold communion with God; in the perfect, every member of the Church is permitted communion. Of this hereafter. Let us now examine into the Scripture references.

And, first, of Isaiah lxvi. 19—21. The words to be found are, "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in *a clean vessel* into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord."

This text plainly refers to the period when God's glory should be revealed to the Gentiles. The 66th, with the former chapter, the 65th, wholly refer to that period. The 65th begins by the declaration that God should be found of them that sought Him not, and that to a nation not called by His name He would present Himself. It is, therefore, correct to assign these texts to the new order of priesthood under the new covenant. Thus far we are agreed. Here we part. Potter thinks they predict an ecclesiastical priesthood to be gathered out of every nation. We declare them to mean an order of men spiritually allied to Christ. He thinks them intended for an ecclesiastical order, a separate body in the kingdom of mixed good and bad; we assert them to intend men washed from their sins in the blood of Christ, and in virtue thereof are "kings and priests" (Rev. i. 5, 6). It will be observed Isaiah writes, "an offering in a *clean vessel* into the house of the Lord." This marks the character of the priesthood. It is those brought in a clean vessel who become priests. The condition annexed to the promise is fulfilled. They are made righteous by union with

Christ. They are all "taught of the Lord," they "obey His voice indeed," and, therefore, are become "a peculiar treasure," "a kingdom of priests," "a holy nation."

Now of Isaiah lx. 17. The words are, "For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make *thy officers peace*, and *thine exactors righteousness*." A divine, with eyes open to behold the abominations which have been committed under a clergy rule, has not hesitated to apply such a text as this as referring to that rule. Such is the blindness of partisanship.

This text declares what has been previously stated, that the officers or priests shall be brought as in a clean vessel. God will make the officers peace, and the exactors righteousness. It is curious to observe how mingled the prophecies are in the several prophetical books. Isaiah begins and concludes with the opening prediction. The peaceable kingdom is proclaimed in the 1st and 2nd, and in the 65th and 66th chapters. In the intermediate are filled in, under types and figures, the course of the kingdom. In the 60th, from whence the text is taken, we arrive at the period when, after long depression, the Church is to rise in her majesty: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The prophet is predicting the advancement of Zion, or the Church, when she shall be called "the city of the Lord" (verse 14), that is, when she shall be recognised as "the holy city,"* when the sons that before

* This great truth does not yet meet with acceptance. It is the key to the Scriptures. Without it their treasures cannot be unlocked. Only one public writer of the day, Dr. Thom, has accepted it. He does not so specially state in a critique on "The True Church," with which he has honoured me in the "Universalist," but in a letter he writes "In the main you seem to me quite right." The critique would almost lead a reader to think he was entirely opposed. He writes "In the meshes of an unscriptural system he is at present entangled." He is meaning with regard to the subject of death as the consequence of sin and of "the time, times, and half-a-time of Daniel." On both of these subjects, Dr. Thom differs wholly from me in opinion.

afflicted her shall now come bending unto her, and they that before despised her shall now bow themselves down to the soles of her feet. That "whereas she has been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through her, now shall she be an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." And when this period arrives, and it is at hand, then "for brass will God bring gold, and for iron will He bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron; He will also make her *officers peace, and her exactors righteousness;*" and "her people shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of God's planting, the work of His hands, that He may be glorified." Then shall "a little one become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation" (Isa. lx. 17—22). This imagery needs no explanation. It is sufficiently graphic and plain as not to be misunderstood. When the Church on earth shall be known as the "Holy City," then will the improved character, proper to Christianity, be restored.

Of Isaiah lxi. 6. In this 61st chapter is a further prediction of the change. The people of God in the past have been oppressed, they have been led to the stake, they have been cast into prison, they have had contumely passed upon them; but now is proclaimed "liberty to the captives," and "healing to the broken-hearted." It is the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. An Ecclesiastical Church, with its canon law grinding into powder the people, had obtained. The change declared has overthrown the oppressive rule, "to comfort them that mourn." There are good tidings for the meek, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. It is the acceptable year "to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." The denunciations against the house of Jacob, "called by the name of Israel," and who "call themselves of the Holy City," have gone forth, and the simulate house of Jacob

has been scattered to the winds, and now has arisen the reign of "the saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 22). These "shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed their flocks, and the sons of aliens shall be their plowmen and their vinedressers." The true believers shall now possess the land. The rule shall be restored to them whom God has declared shall rule. As God hates robbery for burnt-offering, and loves judgment, so He will direct the work of His people in truth, and He will make an everlasting covenant with them. Strangers to the Holy City, "the sons of aliens," as they are called, shall be "plowmen and vinedressers and feed the flock," but the faithful ones shall possess the land, and "shall be named *the Priests of the Lord:* men shall call them the ministers of our God." The seed which the Lord hath blessed shall greatly rejoice, and be clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with a robe of righteousness, and "so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations."

While this explanation has afforded a vehicle for showing the future,* it is seen that the language of the old Hebrew writers, with reference to a nation of priests, is then wholly prophetic of a future. The spiritual priesthood takes effect in the New dispensation. All included in the covenant by spiritual union with Christ are made righteous thereby, the condition is fulfilled, the promise observed, and the spiritual Israel becomes a nation of priests. This is the meaning of Exodus xix. 5, 6: Isa. lxvi. 19—21; lx. 17; lxi. 6; and not that assigned these texts by Potter.

If we examine the New Testament, we shall find its teaching

* Those who would look into the future, let them examine Isaiah, beginning at the 47th chapter, onwards, and compare with Ezekiel 34th, onwards, and with Daniel. For illumination on these prophecies, see "True Church."

to be what these texts are stated to mean. In Revelation we find it written, that "He who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God" (Rev. i. 5, 6); and, again, the like declaration in chap. v. 10; again, chap. xx. 6; again, the same is taught in chap. xxii. 3, 4, 5.

Agreeably with these declarations we find similar teaching to prevail in the Epistles.

St. Peter, in the second chapter of his first epistle, teaches this truth. He writes, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious," that is, "if ye be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God," then, "as lively stones ye are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And that this priesthood has reference to the faithful under the New Covenant, St. Peter goes on to show that the stone which the builders disallowed was become the head of the corner, that they who before were the appointed, yet stumbling at the Word, being disobedient, were displaced, and they "who before were not a people, are now the people of God," and are become "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." In this language of Peter we find the fulfilment of the previous predictions of the old Hebrew prophets.

Under the Levitical law priests were ordained having infirmities, but under the law of righteousness priests are ordained cleansed by the Word from their infirmities. Priesthood, as having become universal, constitutes the primary subject of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. He goes on to shew the converted Hebrews, "the holy brethren," that "they are partakers of the heavenly calling" (iii. 1); that if they hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end, they constitute Christ's house (ver. 6), and are made partakers of Christ (ver. 14).

They are exhorted to come boldly unto the throne of grace, seeing that they now have a different high priest to the former high priest, they have a Great High Priest passed into the heavens (iv. 14—16). He then goes on to compare the difference between the Great High Priest and former high priests. They were encompassed with infirmities, and ought for themselves, as for the people, "to offer for sins" (v. 3). But this Great High Priest, "being made perfect," is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." And St. Paul tells them that they need to be taught (as men do in the present day), "which be the first principles of the oracles of God." The fact that they now had a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the prince of Salem, was a fact to which they should give heed, as lying at the root of the first principles of the oracles of God. He therefore counsels, "let us leave the principles of the doctrine, and go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works;" for he tells them it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, if they shall fall away, to renew for themselves a reconciliation by an outward act. There has been one sacrifice for sins, and this is all-sufficient. Having been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good Word of God, if they should fall away they cannot renew by a sacrifice of dead works unto repentance, seeing they would crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh. It would testify to their unbelief, and be a tacit declaration of non-acceptance of the one perfect sacrifice, and constitute a denial of Jesus. St. Paul proceeds to show the superior character of the eternal priesthood of Christ, and that He is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises (viii. 6). Then is exhibited the perfected character of the new covenant, and the instructed and righteous condition of the people. The first covenant had a worldly sanctuary, and ordinances of divine services, which stood in meats and drinks and divers washings, but the second covenant consists in that Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself

without spot to God, to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God (ix. 1—14). Therefore it is, we have a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands: a tabernacle in which is no more sacrifice for sin. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Under the law, every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sin; but under the new covenant of grace, Christ offered Himself once for all, and which sacrifice cleanseth from all sin. Under the Levitical law only the priests entered into the sanctuary, or the first tabernacle, accomplishing the services of God; and into the second, or holiest of all, only the High Priest; "*the Holy Ghost this signifying*"* that the way into the holiest of all was not then made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was standing. But now that we have a Great High Priest passed into the heavens, let us have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, through His flesh" (x. 19—20).

Christ has offered an atoning sacrifice once for all, and "the just shall live by faith" in this atonement. Now this is the Gospel, and the supreme principle of God's teaching, the object being to restore man to communion with his Maker. All who rise to this faith have life in Christ, and are made one with him. They partake of the divine principle of His humanity. God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions. To restore man to uprightness and to communion with God is the great end of the Gospel. They who would seek to place again between man and his Maker an order of men, as a mediating body, have the audacity to rise up in opposition to God. They who seek to counteract the benign and glorious work of God, and bring back again a sacrificial, intercessory, and mediating priesthood, blind

* Compare this declaration with Potter's, that the High Priest was typical of Christian bishops.

guides of the blind, in their ignorance and impiety would drag the world backwards. But happily God has rendered this impossible. His eternal purpose cannot be changed.

In conformity with the Epistle to the Hebrews is the whole teaching of the Gospel. Throughout are declarations of eternal life in Christ, and a free invite to all to come boldly unto the throne of grace, and partake of that life. Life in Christ is communion with God (John i. 4; iii. 36; vi. 33; xiv. 6; Ephes. v. 30). The light of the world shed abroad upon the earth has now been vouchsafed to man these 1800 years, yet it is but feebly seen. Men turn their eyes from it. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"—*God himself.* "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." By Him came grace and truth, and the law of ordinances passed away. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Then did we see as in a glass darkly, but now face to face. All have easy access to Christ. To approach unto Him needs no intercessory priest, but all who so desire it may be of the royal priesthood. All may approach. "Come unto me," says our Lord, "all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And, again, "I am come a light into the world, that *whosoever* believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John xii. 46). And, again, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." And, again, "he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Such are some of the declarations of our Great High Priest, and they need not a mediating priest to enforce them.

In the discourse wherein the latter declaration is found (John vi), the perfected character of the Church is announced, and our Lord quotes the language of ancient prophecy "and they shall be all taught of God." It is only "they that have

heard and have learned of the Father," that come unto Christ. These form the Church. These have eternal life in Christ, immediate and continuous, ever present life. All are invited. The invite is to all, but God knows who will and who will not accept the free gift (vi. 64). All that are weary have a rest offered them. All are invited to partake of the living stream which proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb (John vii. 37; Rev. xxii. 17).

This is the Gospel, and this has to be proclaimed to the world, and for this our Lord commanded "Go ye and *teach* all nations." The end and object of a ministry is to teach. Ministers are to be chosen for their "aptness to teach." The object is to proclaim the Gospel, or the good news. The purpose of a ministry is not the establishment of a mediatorial priesthood, "Jesus ever liveth to make intercession," and His intercession alone availeth, and is complete. He is not alone intercessor, but He is judge, and He is far above all intercessors, for He knoweth the secrets of all hearts, and the humble, contrite prayer, "Lord, forgive me, a sinner!" will reach His ears, when the Pharisaical righteousness of "Thank God, I am not as other men," will fall dull upon the averted ear. "Why have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?" (Isa. lviii). We would commend the whole chapter to a Pharisaical world.

Upon the subject of priesthood the Chevalier Bunsen is eloquent. He says, that all the great historical races had a priesthood, and that only the Jews were conscious of its significance. That this was twofold. It pointed to the estrangement from God, and in that a few were permitted to approach the Deity, it held forth a hope of future reunion. In man's estrangement, the few were permitted to mediate, and to sacrifice in sin offerings, and thank offerings, and that these were symbols of a future, when the act of the Incarnate God by His one great atonement, or sin offering, would render possible the great

thank offering of mankind through Christ by means of the Spirit.*

* "If we apply all this to those views of priesthood and sacrifice which we have already enunciated, thus much appears to be clear. First, that priesthood and sacrifice, in the sense in which the Jews and the heathen held them, have altogether, and for ever, ceased to be true expressions of the religious feeling of mankind. There can, henceforth, be no more human, and, therefore, typical mediators between God and man, for the Mediator, the High Priest, is himself God; no more acts of mediation (sacrifices) can henceforth exist, as means of producing inward peace and satisfaction in the conscience, for the true sacrifice of atonement has once for all been offered, and the true sacrifice of thanksgiving is continually being offered. The mediatorial act of the reconciled man consists simply in his free faith; his faith, namely, in the love of God revealed to him by Jesus Christ, in the Spirit which is promised by Christ, and in the work of that Spirit in renewing his own heart—and the world. In this sense, then, there could be no more priests among those nations, whose vocation it was to carry forward the new progressive moral order of the world, to realise the kingdom of God amongst men. All types must cease as soon as ever the reality appears. The divine Reality, who had entered visibly and personally into the world, had completed the atonement, and, therefore, by his perfect sacrifice, the sin-offering was for ever abolished. Every attempt at expiation became, from that time forth, a retrogression, or rather, a direct act of unbelief and sinful presumption. The consciousness of sin, indeed, still remained; yea, more; sin first appeared in all its power and hatefulness, when viewed in the light of that image of the divine perfection and power which was manifested in Christ. Man was invited to approach the Deity as man, to draw near to God *immediately* in Christ, and, therefore, with the dignity of a priest. But he could not carry on this immediate personal intercourse with God, under that conviction of sin which the knowledge of Christ awakens, without feeling himself, as he had never felt before, personally responsible for all his actions and thoughts. No other man, he would feel, could relieve him of this responsibility; and more than this, no outward act of his own could supply the lack of those inward feelings of faith and love, by which alone he is reconciled and united with God. Christianity first gave to man's moral responsibility its true position, first made it the central feeling of the individual, and caused it to be felt as the inseparable appendage of the awful gift of personality. Thus far, then, had every individual man become a priest of the Most High, because morally responsible to him alone. Man's whole life, in intercourse with the world, as well as in the direct worship of God, was to be a continual sacrifice, to form a portion of the great work of the Spirit of

The Scriptures declare the Church to be built upon "the foundation of Apostles and prophets," but prelacy would build it upon bishops.* This scheme of Satan teaches that bishops are successors of the Apostles. The Scriptures declare the Apostles, who formed the foundation of the Church, to be but twelve (Rev. xxi. 14); prelacy would make them numberless. Great care was taken to maintain, and not to exceed, this number; prelacy would overthrow this arrangement. This false teaching had an early beginning, but not in apostolic time. The bishops or elders of the Apostolic Churches were very different to the ecclesiastical bishops that succeeded. The Apostles were elders; but elders, who were not Apostles, were not considered successors of the Apostles. Prelacy has no warrant from Scripture.

Prelacy is, therefore, obliged to seek for authority where it meets with countenance, among the Fathers. And thus it is we hear so much about the Fathers, and so little about the Scriptures. If two churchmen have a strife of words they get all among the fathers. To those who know the false teaching of the fathers, the whole scene is ludicrous. The disputants in solemn earnestness are beating the air, while each thinks he is bestowing heavy blows upon the other. They "part for strife and for debate to make their voices to be heard on high," and seek for weapons of offence and of defence. They are conscious of the immutability of truth, and they make a shew of seeking it. But they seek

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Love, by whose influences mankind is restored, and the kingdom of truth and righteousness founded and advanced. Faith and morality were now inseparable, and essentially equivalent; what was external in former religions, had become internal—the inward disposition had taken the place of the outward act."—*Bunsen's Church of the Future.*

* See Potter, who quotes the language of Cyprian, "Thence, in the course of times and successions, the ordination of bishops, and the constitution of the Church proceeds; *so that the Church is built on the bishops*, and all acts of the Church are governed and directed by them, its presidents" (p. 118)

in vain. The jewel is in a casket, and they seek for it amid much that is rubbish.

Why go to the fathers for truth? Is it probable that in the ages immediately succeeding the apostolic, a right knowledge of Scripture should be obtained? Had they, in those ages, advantages which we have not? They could only go to the same fountain from which we drink. They could only draw truth from the same source that we do. And let us consider under what disadvantageous circumstances. They had the Scriptures in MSS., without notes, or comments, or references, and without a concordance, as a ready means of finding a passage. We have the Scriptures in print, with all these adjuncts. Access to a copy was then all but impossible; now copies are met with at every turn. Then a man must go to the copy, it was so bulky, and deposited with such regard to safety. Now the copy offers itself for ready acceptance. They had it in dispersed fragments, requiring immensity of labour to get a comprehensive understanding of the whole. We have it in its present condensed and arranged form, with every facility for acquiring a comprehension of the whole. They were passing out of a dreary darkness, and only emerging into light; we have all but the full blaze of day. They were passing out of heathen mysticism; we have the advantage of a long acquaintance with the Scriptures. They had unworthy conceptions of Deity; we begin to apprehend the God of Nature and of Love. Priestcraft had reigned dominant through many ages; we begin to perceive its decay, and its total inaptitude to Christianity, that it is altogether foreign to the perfected covenant of our God. It is not difficult to determine in which age the Scriptures would be best understood.

In St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xii., we have a description of "the body of Christ, and members in particular," and we should look in vain among these for ecclesiastical governors. He writes, "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that

miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Now, let us examine each of these members of the Lord's body successively, and see whether among them is to be found ecclesiastical rulers.

First are Apostles. The Apostles were twelve in number. There were other Apostles, of whom hereafter. But of the Apostles, they chosen as the foundation, there were twelve (Rev. xxi. 14). As under the Hebrew dispensation, there were twelve heads of the old house of Israel, so under the Christian dispensation there are twelve heads of the new house of Israel. These have the pre-eminence, and they are made the foundations of the walls of the Holy City. Christ has built His Church, and the foundations long since laid, and the superstructure rising. Prelacy begins afresh, and lays other foundations, which they are ever laying. The superstructure of the one is rising in majesty, and is a Christian building; the superstructure of the other has risen, and is an ecclesiastical Church, and as they are continually disturbing the foundations, and these not based upon eternal truth, so the whole building is tottering, and will fall. Christ raised His Church upon His first chosen faithful adherents, they who declared in heart and soul "Thou art the son of the living God," and He is building upon it they who are recognised by Him, as in union with Him, as he did aforetime Peter. "Thou art Peter," and with this mutual recognition a Christian Church is being raised as upon a rock. Prelacy has been laying for foundations ecclesiastical bishops, as pretended successors of the Apostles, and they have raised a counterfeit Church, and the result is an antagonist, an ecclesiastical whole, a Clergy Church. Bishops are not Apostles, or successors of Apostles. There cannot be successors of a limited number.

Besides the twelve Apostles, Paul and Barnabas were Apostles. They were chosen for an especial purpose, and the Church was directed by the Holy Ghost to "separate me Barnabas and Saul, (or Paul) for the work whereunto I have called them"

(Acts xiii. 2). Prelacy would make Timothy, and Titus, and Epaphroditus, and all elders, Apostles. These have not claim to Apostleship, in the sense used by St. Paul, as the first order in the Church. This subject will be treated of more hereafter when we come to consider "governments."

Potter argues earnestly for the succession, and even when he discovers that Tertullian advocates the existence of a Church, "though they be all laymen," * he attaches no value to this opinion, but everything to the succession. He seizes upon the declaration of Tertullian, who wrote about the latter end of the second century, "that in Africa there had been always bishops," and to these had been conceded ecclesiastical power, and he will not admit the counter statement which goes to the overthrow of an ecclesiastical body. Before this, Potter argues for the three orders of clergy—bishops, presbyters, and deacons. He leaves no room for doubt as to what he means by bishops, for he writes, after quoting some opinions of Clemens of Alexandria, "And a little after he (Clemens) speaks of the gradual promotion of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, which he resembles to the orders of angels. So that here, again, are manifestly three orders of ministers, *the chief of which is the place and office of the Apostles.*" † Bishops are deemed by prelacy to be Apostles. The place and office of Apostles, which Christ limited to a chosen few, prelacy extends to an innumerable host. The Church, according to this notion, is not built upon the chosen elected few, but upon a mass of mixed heterogeneous materials. St. Paul says, Christ "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephes. iv. 11, 12). In this enumeration we shall be troubled to find an order of ecclesiastical rulers, unless the theory of prelacy be admitted, that bishops are

* Potter on Church Government (chap. iv. p. 112).

† Potter on Church Government (p. 111).

Apostles. Prelacy, therefore, claims for bishops to be Apostles. Potter quotes Clemens as writing, "And even now they who live up to the perfect rules of the Gospel may be taken into the number of the Apostles." Though Clemens is reputed to have been "the most universally learned man of any in that age," we do not think many true Christians will hold with this his opinion. In a sense all Christians are Apostles, that is, they have authority to preach the Gospel, they may become priests unto God, and have, therefore, a mission from God. But this is not the sense in which prelacy views Apostleship. Prelacy views it as "first Apostles;" giving precedence, giving pre-eminence, and a power to rule.

Bishops are not Apostles in the sense St. Paul uses the term when writing to the Corinthians, "God hath set some in the Church, *first* Apostles." This will be more evident as we proceed. Bishops are not the foundations of the building, whose Maker is God, the Church. They have, therefore, no claim to the first order among the members of the body of Christ.

Let us see whether they have a claim to the second order, which is composed of prophets.

Who are the prophets that compose the second order? David was a prophet, Isaiah was a prophet, Jeremiah was a prophet, Daniel was a prophet, Micah was a prophet, Zechariah was a prophet, Ezekiel was a prophet. These, with some few others, were the prophets of old. Paul was a prophet, John was a prophet, Peter was a prophet. These, with a few others, were the prophets of the Christian dispensation. All these men were inspired to teach the things appertaining to the kingdom of God. Upon these, and upon the Apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, "is the building fitly framed together," which "groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephes. ii. 20). Of these, though the Apostles came after the older prophets, yet are they preferred before them, as they are especially chosen for the

foundation (Rev. xxi. 14). In the Church, God hath set "first Apostles, secondarily prophets." The Church is built upon the whole body of prophecy, which God has vouchsafed to man, and all who have been the instruments employed by God, or the medium of communication, hold this second place. Few will be hardy enough to claim for popes this position, or for cardinals, or for archbishops, or for bishops, or for archdeacons, or for deacons, or for deans, or for prebends, &c., &c. None of these are known as prophets. Ecclesiastics are not prophets. They have, therefore, no claim under this order to be of the body of Christ—the Church.

"Thirdly, teachers." Are they teachers? Some of them are, some are not. Many who profess to teach, and have been ordained to teach, belong not to the Church. However, some there are really and truly teachers in the Church. But the teachers here meant are not limited to these. All instructed of God and teach, are the teachers meant. The scriptures make no mention of the distinction of clergy and laity, which found admission to christianity without the warrant of the New Testament, and to which indeed it is repugnant. Clerical teachers are not the teachers meant. Those "taught of the Lord" are the only teachers admitted to the Church, and of these who communicate of their teachings, are the teachers meant. Not man's appointed teachers, but God's appointed teachers. These have appropriated to them the third order. In the wider circle of the Catholic kingdom are teachers comprehending all who labour in the ministry. Of these, some are truly of the teachers meant, some are not. These latter are foretold of, and their position placed by the prophets. In the New Testament they are the unprofitable servants, they are the vessels to dishonour. In the great house, there will be some vessels to honour, and some to dishonour (2 Tim. 11—20). The vessels to dishonour are not the rulers. The rulers are men who "*must be blameless*" (1 Tim. iii. 2). In the present day, this scriptural

assertion will strike men with dismay. Blameless! Be blameless! Yes, blameless! Enough has been put forth to show that to those in Christ there is no condemnation. They are held to be blameless. This class of men whom we shall attempt hereafter to point out, will be the rulers. The dominion shall be given to the saints of the Most High (Dan. vii. 22—27). In the Catholic kingdom will men be employed, many of whom will be strangers to the Church, and these will be the vessels to dishonour. The rule has for many ages been with an ecclesiastical Church. It "made war with the saints, and overcame them." The rule shall hereafter be with the saints, true Christians, the justified in Christ Jesus. Their servants, an assistant ministry, shall be the vine dressers. They shall help to build up the walls of Zion (Isa. lx. 10; lxi. 5). They are the men of continual employment (Ezek. xxxix. 13, 14). These, however, are not the teachers included in the third order. As nothing entereth the Church that defileth, so the teachers here meant are only those "taught of the Lord."

Will ecclesiastics claim under the fourth order, that of miracles? Miracles were granted to the Church in the Apostolic age as voices from God to an unbelieving world. They were departures from nature's course to gain attention to the presence of the Lord of Nature. When they effected their object they ceased. God often now by His Holy Spirit speaks and directs his servants, but not miraculously. The awakening influence of the Great Spirit upon a surrounding world of spirits, is not by supernatural means, but regulated by the laws which govern spiritual life. To the scandal of Christianity, there are men yet to be found who advocate the presence of God by continued interpositions with the laws of nature. Crafty priesthood, knowing well the influence which an interposition with the ordinary laws of nature has upon mankind, is continually inventing some scheme to demonstrate the existence of miracles. It needs not be written that these are not the miracles meant. The miracles granted for the building

of the Church were those exhibited by our Lord and his servants in the Apostolic age.

This latter observation will apply to "gifts of healings," "helps," "diversities of tongues." We will, therefore, dismiss these, and come to "governments."

"Governments." What is meant by governments? The word government we all know. But it is not government, but "governments." The word itself would primarily show that papistical government is not meant. Nor was government given to Peter, and, therefore, quasi-successors could not succeed to what he never had. It does not mean papal rule. This is so evident, that it needs not the trouble to discuss the claim. We may leave this to those who are fond of disputation. But do "governments" mean ecclesiastical governments? "Obey them that have the rule over you." "Obey the Church." Do these injunctions apply to ecclesiastical rule? Let us inquire.

It will be observed, that "governments" is placed all but last, "diversities of tongues" only being below. Prelacy claims to be first as Apostles. Now, if the order had been, first apostles and governments, and then prophets succeeding, it would have given some room to believe that our Lord intended an apostolical rule, followed by successors, which would have entitled to a sacerdotal rule. And then possibly we may have looked for a hierarchical Church, and a Church built upon the bishops. And the Scripture language probably would have been, "the Church built upon Apostles, governments, and prophets. But it is not so; governments are not connected with Apostles. They stand at opposite ends, plainly showing the little connection which governments and Apostles have. The pseudo-Apostles can have no claim to "governments." Apostles, themselves, only as elders had government. As Apostles they had not government given to them. Our Lord declared that he that would be greatest among them should be as a servant. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority

upon them are called benefactors. *But ye shall not be so;* but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve:" and then our Lord points out His own course as the example, "I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke xxii. 25—27). The rule was to be of a totally opposite character to that which the kings of the Gentiles exercised. It was not to be a kingly rule. It was not to be an arbitrary rule. It was to be as one that serveth. It was to be as the faithful steward of a household over fellow-servants. The stewards were to feed the flock of God; not "to feed themselves," but to feed the flock. They were to instruct, and to guide, but not to exercise an iron rule over them.

The Gospel everywhere harmonises with this teaching. Everywhere is taught brotherly love, charity, humbleness of mind, forgiving one another, forbearing one another, teaching and admonishing one another, hospitality, even to all things in common. These present the great features of proper Christianity. Rule, or "governments," is the last thing thought of. But that things may be done in order, and with decency, and that a Christian rule may obtain, so "governments" are made an order in the spiritual building, the Church. Had governments been placed in the first order with apostles, and made the foundation, the whole Gospel would have harmonized therewith. Had it been God's purpose to have guided by ecclesiastical rule, the arrangement would have accorded thereto, and ecclesiastics would have no trouble to have established their rule. But God has pleased to work by a scheme totally opposite. A scheme not in accordance with the rule of this world, but in accordance with the rule of His spiritual kingdom not of this world. A rule which governs more in serving than in ruling. The rule is intended to be with an order of men spiritually allied to Him; not in semblance, or in name, but in reality. And let us not suppose that spiritual "governments" are impalpable, a shadowless substance. The Apostles were not shadowless, the prophets

were not shadowless, teachers are not shadowless, neither are "governments" shadowless. Let us try to understand what this spiritual rule is, "governments."

We find an order of men, chosen in the several primitive communities, or churches, called elders or bishops, the terms being synonymous. These elders were, what their name would import, the leading men of each community, chosen for their staid character, and advanced moral and religious superiority, and not ecclesiastics. Christianity knows nothing of ecclesiastics as a separate body. Elders may or may not teach. Among the qualifications to direct in the choice of an elder, was "aptness to teach," and other qualities, together with this, giving precedence, would direct the choice. The office did not require this as a necessity. They were not appointed as solely to preach or minister, and certainly not to mediate. Their office was to superintend the christian congregation over which they were chosen. They were properly fatherly guides, and, as a father watches over a family, so an elder watched over a church or Christian congregation.

Besides an elder to every church, there were deacons appointed. The office of deacon was especially to superintend the distribution of daily food when Christian communities had all things common. They were chosen for their staid character, having a good report of all men. This office in a community, where priority as an absolute power is unknown, was scarcely inferior to that of elder, and only so as looking up to the chosen head representing the authority of the whole. The office of deacon was not limited to the superintendence of purely secular matters. They preached. They ministered. Neither elders, or deacons, were ecclesiastics, using that word in its ordinary acceptation.

Of bishops, or elders:

1. Bishops and elders are synonymous terms. In the epistle of Paul to Titus we find Paul declaring the character suited to be an elder, and while doing this he changes the term "elder"

for "bishop," showing that he employs the two terms indiscriminately, and means by them one and the same office (Titus i. 5—7).

2. Bishops are not elected to rule extensive districts, or large divisions of a country, as do metropolitans and present bishops. They are to be elected in every city. In the small island of Crete, Titus was left to set in order the things that were wanting, and "to ordain elders in every city." In each city, in which was found a church or congregation, a bishop or elder was to be elected (Titus i. 5).

3. Elders preached or not; their office did not impose the necessity of preaching. They were expected to teach, and were to be chosen by their fitness to teach; in other respects being found suitable (Titus i. 9; 1 Tim. iii. 2). Though expected to admonish, and to exhort, and, if possessed of ability, to labour in the word and doctrine, yet their office did not impose this upon them as a necessity. St. Paul writes, "Let the elders that *rule well* be counted worthy of double honour, *especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*" (1 Tim. v. 17). In the primitive churches the elders ruled, and those who *ruled well* were to be worthy of double honour, and especially those who, beside ruling well, added the labouring in the word and doctrine. Some there were, therefore, who did not teach. In the primitive churches there was no order in this particular. No one member was appointed solely to teach, but when the Church assembled, one or other of the brethren taught and ministered. This is very evident from the relation in 1 Cor. xiv. Even the women at first spake, but this was forbidden. But the very fact that they were forbidden indirectly substantiates the truth of the foregoing; namely, that there was no appointed minister, but that any one of the brethren moved to do so taught the rest. The elder, or bishop, was appointed to preside, and keep order, and regulate proceedings, and not chosen as one set apart to labour in "the word and doctrine."

4. The bishop was properly a fatherly guide. This is evident from the advice to Timothy—"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters" (1 Tim. v. 1, 2). The whole community is grouped as a family. The relation which the elder bears towards the whole congregation is that of a father to a family. He rules, it is true; but he rules in love: and if he rule badly he is open to censure. The relation is clearly not that of an absolute monarch, but that of a fatherly guide.

5. The elder is not an ecclesiastic in the sense that term is used. The elder belongs not to a separate class. The elder and younger are so spoken of in the preceding quotation as to shew a common bond of union. A separate priesthood ceased with the Hebrew dispensation, and merged into the universal priesthood of the Christian. The elders of the Christian did not follow the type of the Hebrew priesthood. The "seventy other also," chosen by our Lord, would appear to point to the character of elders. The type in the Hebrew covenant of the seventy in the Christian, would appear to be the seventy elders of the tribes, and who were lay elders; but, as in the Christian, the distinction ceases of laity and clergy, so elders, or rulers, perform the united functions of both. That of ruler as chosen by the people; that of priest as of right divine unverversally granted.

6. The elders have no grades; they are all upon an equality. Elders, as elders, are equal. Apostles, as elders, were only equal to elders. Apostles, as Apostles, were superior to all others. They were superior, because the Church is built upon the twelve; and Paul and Barnabas, as chosen to be Apostles to the Gentiles directly and expressly by the Holy Ghost, were superior. The superiority in all these was personal to them. It could not descend to others. Christ chose twelve, and only twelve, on whom to build the Church; and the two Apostles, Barnabas

and Paul, were chosen as His witnesses to the Gentiles, in this fulfilling and satisfying the Hebrew law, which required two witnesses to render valid a testimony.* All these exercised authority, but it was the mild rule of guidance and expostulation. They did not arrogate to themselves a pre-eminent position, but in stripes and labours. They called themselves elders (3 John i. 1; 1 Peter v. 1), but they did not preach an arbitrary rule for elders. Elders were not to lord it over God's heritage. The younger were to submit themselves unto the elder, but *all* were to be clothed with humility, and *all* to be subject *one to another* (1 Peter v. 5). Submission the rule, government the exception. The apostolic government was marked by humility. The whole structure of the Gospel is opposed to monarchical rule in the Church. The examples brought forward by divines as authorizing metropolitans do not warrant such a conclusion. The Gospel scheme is opposed thereto; and so we never read in the Scripture of archbishop or arch-elder. St. Peter writes—"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." He claims no superiority, but places himself on a par with other elders; and the elders here exhorted are not metropolitans. They are not to be "lords over God's heritage;" they are not to be exalted, but clothed with humility. The younger are to submit themselves to the elder; but all are to be "subject one to another." Exaltation was not to be looked for here, that God "may exalt the humble in due time" (1 Peter v).

7. Bishops or elders are to elect to become elders. They are to desire the office out of pure love to God. They are "to take the oversight, not by constraint or for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind." The office is not intended to be

* Compare Deut. xvii. 6, with Matt. xviii. 16, and John viii. 17. Upon the subject of God's "two witnesses" in the Revelation, some expositors are very erroneous. In this respect I would point to a recent work by Dr. Wordsworth. He has mistaken the character of the "two witnesses" as he has the "four beasts" or "living creatures." I hope to demonstrate this in a future edition of the "True Church."

remunerative in a worldly sense. They are to accept the office cheerfully, prompted thereto by an ardent desire to do God's will. And they who desireth the office, prompted by this feeling, "desireth a good work" (1 Tim. iii).

8. A bishop "must be blameless" (1 Tim. iii. 2); he must be accepted in the Son; he must be a true Christian; he must be cleansed by the Word. This last has relation to the preceding. Only one "cleansed by the Word," and "taught by the Lord," would desire an unremunerative office; looking not to this world, but to the next, "to be exalted in due time."

Of deacons:

1. Deacons were appointed to distribute the daily food when a Church had all things common (Acts vi. 1—3). Their office is to superintend the temporalities or funds of a Church. They were the purse-bearers. They were appointed to ease the Apostles of the burden of secular affairs, that "the Apostles may give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

2. Deacons were elected by the people. The whole multitude chose them because "the saying" of the Apostles pleased them. The Apostles did not authoritatively decree that there should be deacons, but, as the saying pleased the multitude, so deacons were elected by the people.

3. Deacons were not young men elected into a separate order to prepare them for the ministry. They were staid men like the elders. They were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom."

4. The office did not limit the labours of deacons to the daily distributions. Though it is not said they were ordained to preach, yet Stephen and Philip, two of the deacons, were earnest workers in the word and doctrine. This is conformable to the Christian dispensation, which gives a title to preach and minister to all true Christians. Our Lord's command "Go ye and preach," applies universally. All are expected to preach the good tidings, or the gospel, when opportunity offers, and thus it is

we find in the Apostolic Churches, that all who had the capability felt themselves authorized to teach. True believers being a "kingdom of priests," the first examples of Christian life shew the practical application of this doctrine.

To neither office of elder or deacon belonged absolute authority. Authority resides in the people, as we have seen was exercised in the election of the deacons. We find when any act of importance was done, it was by consent of the brethren. In that first council of the Church respecting the subject of circumcision, the apostles and elders, *with the whole Church,* send chosen men "*chief men among the brethren,*" by whom letters were sent after this manner—"The Apostles, and elders, and *brethren,* send greeting unto *the brethren.*" And that these epistles were in the name of all, is after confirmed in these words, "It seemed good unto us, being *assembled with one accord*" (Acts xv). The fact of having all things common as a feature of apostolic Christianity demonstrates to the truth of equality, and that any authority exercised for the sake of the public weal, or, that all things may be done with decency and order, is delegated authority.

Elders and deacons were not a separated class from the people. There is no mention in the New Testament of Christians being divided into two classes. This was a device of after times. Christianity, following in the wake of the Levitical priesthood and of sacerdotalism, had grafted upon it spuriously the old Hebrew and Pagan opinions. The separation into clergy and laity is foreign to the genius of the Gospel, and therefore it is that no mention is made thereof in the apostolic writings.

Under the primitive arrangement there appears no certain provision for the maintenance of a body of persons to preach the word and doctrine. Elders were not appointed expressly thereto, neither were deacons. Some of each of these, out of fervent hearts, preached, but their offices did not impose it as a necessity. Elders are intended to teach. They are to be chosen, having

"aptness to teach" (1 Tim. iii. 2). Other qualities being present, a capacity to teach would direct the choice. Elders and deacons sometimes taught, but so likewise did some who are called "brethren;" a term including all, but when used in connection with elders, distinguishing the body of people from the elders. Judas and Silas exhorted and taught; and though expressly mentioned as prophets, that is, instructed in the things of God, yet they are also mentioned as chief men among the brethren (Acts xv. 22). The Scripture scheme for Christian society is not determined with extreme precision in the New Testament. Notwithstanding this, God's purpose concerning Christian life is not wholly withheld. The prophecies of the Old Testament, with the statements of the New, together with an appreciation of the Gospel scheme, or the vital principles of Christianity, will be found to guide intelligently thereto. This does not improperly belong to the present subject, but we reserve the consideration of Church life for the last pamphlet.

Before we leave the present subject, let us examine the chief arguments used for ecclesiastical governments, and the separation of Christians into the two bodies of clergy and laity.

The separation has been received since the early days of Christianity so much as a matter of course, that little is to be found among ecclesiastical writers concerning it. Hooker states it, as a fact, of the clergy, that "Their difference, therefore, from other men is in that they are a distinct order." He supports this declaration by a reference to Heb. ii. 17, in these words: "And St. Paul himself, dividing the body of the Church of Christ into two moieties, nameth the one part ἰδιώτας, which is as much as to say, the order of the laity; the opposite part whereunto we, in like sort, term the order of God's clergy, and the spiritual power which He hath given them, the power of their order, so far forth as the same consisteth in the bare execution of holy things, called properly the affairs of God."* We may

* Hooker, Book V., chap. lxxvii. 2.

presume that he sought out the weightiest text that could be found to support the asserted and received opinion. It puzzles an ordinary mind to find the distinction spoken of either in the text mentioned (Heb. ii. 17) or any other.

Hooker, with all Church divines, relies upon the words to Peter and to the Apostles, concluding that they were intended to convey ecclesiastical power. I use the word ecclesiastical in the ordinary sense, as appertaining to the separated order. He writes previously to the quotation just given, "What angel in heaven could have said to man as our Lord said unto Peter, 'Feed my sheep, preach, baptize. Do this in remembrance of me; whose sins ye retain, they are retained; and their offences in heaven pardoned, whose faults you shall on earth forgive?' What think we? Are these terrestrial sounds, or else are they voices uttered out of the clouds above? The power of the ministry of God translateth out of darkness into glory; it raiseth men from the earth, and bringeth God Himself down from heaven by blessing visible elements; it maketh them invisible grace; it giveth daily the Holy Ghost; it hath to dispose of that flesh which was given for the life of the world, and that blood which was poured out to redeem souls; when it poureth malediction upon the heads of the wicked they perish; when it revoketh the same they revive. O wretched blindness, if we admire not so great a power! more wretched if we consider it aright, and, notwithstanding, imagine that any but God can bestow it! To whom Christ hath imparted power, both over that mystical body, which is the society of souls, and over that natural, which is Himself, for the knitting of both in one."

If this which is here stated be the truth, it is very sinful to attempt to disturb an order with such alleged power. But as we do not think, with Hooker, that a clergy order is a distinct body, having such awful responsibilities, or favoured with so pre-eminent a position, we have no hesitation in teaching a doctrine altogether adverse.

In a similar strain to Hooker writes Archbishop Potter. He makes the promises and gifts of our Lord to the Church, which we hope to explain in the next number, the basis of his arguments for his view of Church government.*

Let us examine, in detail, the most weighty arguments to be found for a clergy rule in the Archbishop's work; and let us confine ourselves almost wholly to those which apply to the apostolic age. We hold it as a fundamental principle that we are not to believe as true, anything that is contrary to the Scriptures, or cannot be proved thereby. In the ages succeeding the apostolic, no doubt there is abundant testimony to the fact of the separation of the Christian body into two distinct bodies, clergy and laity. We have already declared that there is no authority for this in the New Testament, and those who think differently we urge to the proof of their opinion. We declare that such separation is opposed to all the fundamental principles of Christianity. We do not deny that there are ministers; we do not deny that there are men elected to rule and to teach, chosen out of the body, and who, when inducted to office, are called upon more especially than others to preserve order, to chide, to direct, and to instruct. But these are not a separate order; they come out of the people, and belong to the people. Christianity contemplates an instructed condition (Heb. viii. and the prophets). The phase of future society is intended to be the antipodes of the past.

Apostolic Christianity most likely presents the proper model for matured Christianity. Divines urge that when the canon of Scripture was complete, Christianity was complete. No doubt the canon of Scripture was complete; the all-atoning sacrifice was complete; but Church government was not complete, or it would not have been subject to change. Episcopacy, charmed with its position, urges against all further change, that it is sinful to attempt an alteration of that which, it is urged,

* Potter's Church Government, chap. iii., p. 37.

Christ made all perfect. Heresy is the crime charged if one word be said against the alleged perfection of episcopal clergy government. Let us hear what a famed writer says upon the subject of Church government as connected with the second century. He points out a change which about this time began.* It is not at all surprising that the apostolical rule

* "The form of ecclesiastical government, whose commencement we have seen in the last century, was brought in this to a greater degree of stability and consistence. One inspector, or *bishop*, presided over each Christian assembly, to which office he was elected by the voices of the whole people. In this post he was to be watchful and provident, attentive to the wants of the Church, and careful to supply them. To assist him in this laborious province, he formed a council of *presbyters*, which was not confined to any fixed number, and to each of these he distributed his task, and appointed a station, in which he was to promote the interests of the Church. To the bishops and presbyters, the ministers, or *deacons*, were subject; and the latter were divided into a variety of classes, as the different exigencies of the Church required.

"During a greater part of this century, the Christian Churches were independent of each other; nor were they joined together by association, confederacy, or any other bonds but those of charity. Each Christian assembly was a little state, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or, at least, approved, by the society. But, in process of time, all the Christian Churches of a province were formed into one large ecclesiastical body, which, like confederate states, assembled at certain times, in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole. This institution had its origin among the Greeks, with whom nothing was more common than this confederacy of independent states, and the regular assemblies which met, in consequence thereof, at fixed times, and were composed of the deputies of each respective state. But these ecclesiastical associations were not long confined to the Greeks; their great utility was no sooner perceived, than they became universal, and were formed in all places where the Gospel had been planted. To these assemblies, in which the deputies, or commissioners, of several Churches consulted together, the name of *synods* was appropriated by the Greeks, and that of *councils* by the Latins; and the laws that were enacted in these general meetings, were called *canons*, i.e., *rules*.

"These *councils*, of which we find not the smallest trace before the middle of this century, changed the whole face of the Church, and gave it a new form; for by them the ancient privileges of the people were considerably diminished, and the power and authority of the bishops

should have passed into a clergy form, and that Christianity should have received a complexion from the religious systems around.

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greatly augmented. The humility, indeed, and prudence of these pious prelates, prevented their assuming all at once the power with which they were afterwards invested. At their first appearance in these general councils, they acknowledged that they were no more than the delegates of their respective Churches, and that they acted in the name, and by the appointment, of their people. But they soon changed this humble tone, imperceptibly extended the limits of their authority, turned their influence into dominion, and their counsels into laws, and openly asserted, at length, that Christ had empowered them to prescribe to His people authoritative rules of faith and manners. Another effect of these councils was the gradual abolition of that perfect equality which reigned among all bishops in the primitive times; for the order and decency of these assemblies required that some one of the provincial bishops, met in council, should be invested with a superior degree of power and authority; and hence the rights of metropolitans derive their origin. In the meantime the bounds of the Church were enlarged; the custom of holding councils was followed wherever the sound of the Gospel had reached; and the universal Church had now the appearance of one vast republic, formed by a combination of a great number of little states, This occasioned the creation of a new order of ecclesiastics, who were appointed, in different parts of the world, as heads of the Church, and whose office it was to preserve the consistence and union of that immense body whose members were so widely dispersed throughout the nations. Such was the nature and office of the *patriarchs*, among whom, at length, ambition, being arrived at its most insolent period, formed a new dignity, investing the bishop of Rome and his successors with the title and authority of prince of the patriarchs.

"The Christian doctors had the good fortune to persuade the people that the ministers of the Christian Church succeeded to the character, right, and privileges of the Jewish priesthood; and this persuasion was a new source both of honours and profit to the sacred order. This notion was propagated with industry some time after the reign of Adrian, when the second destruction of Jerusalem had extinguished among the Jews all hopes of seeing their government restored to its former lustre, and their country arising out of ruins; and, accordingly, the bishops considered themselves as invested with a rank and character similar to those of the high-priest among the Jews, while the presbyters represented the priests, and the deacons the Levites. It is, indeed, highly probable that they who first introduced this absurd comparison of offices, so entirely distinct, did it rather through ignorance and error than

As before observed, it would appear that considerable latitude is permitted with regard to government. There are not full decisive rules for complete organization given, and this betokens a laxity which shall permit the needful expansion to meet the ever-growing, ever-unfolding wants of the different phases of society. Fixed, immutable rules need not be looked for, but certain broad principles may be sought. The few further remarks we shall think it needful to make will have reference to these. Divines who advocate a clergy episcopal rule seek for arguments among the fathers. We shall pass these by as idly told tales. We think the canon of Scripture complete, and are content therewith. Arguments drawn from the fathers are worthy of very little attention. If Christ intends an episcopal clergy rule, it will be found laid down in the New Testament, as aforetime the Levitical priesthood was in the Old, with an authority not to be disturbed.

Potter attempts to shew:

1. "That when our Lord left the world His Apostles were entrusted with authority to govern the Church."

2. "That this authority was intrusted equally with all the Apostles."

3. "That when our Lord was going to leave the world He again enlarged their powers;" that, "Their government was of the same nature with the government of Christ; for thus He promised—'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.' Our Lord received from God the keys of heaven; and by virtue of this grant had power on earth to forgive sins: the same keys, with the power which accompanied

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through artifice or design. The notion, however, once introduced, produced its natural effects; and these effects were pernicious. The errors to which it gave rise were many; and one of its immediate consequences was the establishing a greater difference between the Christian pastors and their flock than the genius of the Gospel seems to admit."—Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Cent. II., chap. ii.

them, was first promised to Peter, as the foreman of the apostolic college, and afterwards actually conferred on all the Apostles in these words—'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.' "

4. "That in the times of the Apostles there were three distinct orders of ministers, by whom the Christian Church was governed."

5. "That bishops are successors of the Apostles."

With regard to the two first propositions, we have no remark to make beyond this, that the government the Apostles exercised was not lordly government, but that of guidance, of exhortation, of teaching.

With regard to the third, we have little to offer here. The powers granted to the Apostles in the memorable words of our Lord form the main subject of a future number. We will remark, that the second appears to clash with the third, wherein Peter is declared to be "the foreman of the apostolic college." And we will also remark, that the kingdom appointed unto the Apostles was a rule personal and limited to them "to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 30).

With regard to the fourth and fifth, which are involved, we dissent from their declarations, and shall attempt to shew that there were not three orders of ministers during the apostolic age, and that bishops are not successors of Apostles.

But we must understand what is meant by the three orders of ministers. It is beyond dispute, there were Apostles, elders or bishops, and deacons; but these are not the three intended. The three intended are bishops, presbyters, and deacons. Potter writes, at p. 77—"From these passages of Scripture, it is evident, beyond all dispute, that beside the Apostles, there were, in this first age of the Church, at least two orders of fixed and standing ministers; namely, that of bishops and elders, with another of deacons. But it has been disputed, whether the

bishops, who are called presbyters in some of the fore-mentioned texts, and in others, joined with deacons only, were all of the order next above deacons, and the same with those who, in the following ages, were distinguished by the name of presbyters from a superior order of bishops; or whether they were of an order above that of mere presbyters."

Perhaps very little more is needed than that furnished by this cónfused passage to shew the doubtful office of bishop. It was an early disputed question. It became a disputed point because Christianity had spuriously grafted upon it past notions of priestcraft. Potter writes—"I will not take upon me to decide this controversy, which has exercised the pens of so many wise and learned men, but only suggest a few things, which I shall leave to the judgment of the impartial reader."

We must understand what the writer means by presbyter. He calls an elder a presbyter. He quotes the language of the Apostles who style themselves elders (1 Peter v. 1; 3 John i. 1); and then he is anxious to shew that though apostles were presbyters, or elders, yet all elders were not Apostles; but that some elders, beside the twelve and Barnabas and Paul, were, and are, Apostles.

Beaten by his own course of reasoning out of the untenable ground, that bishops and elders in the Apostles' time related to distinct offices, he retreats into the inner, though not impregnable, stronghold of episcopacy. He attempts to shew that though elders and bishops are mere presbyters, yet certainly the Apostles were a superior order, and that these furnish authority for a superior and governing order of clergy. He writes at p. 80:—"Though we should allow that the names of bishop and presbyter did, in that age, signify the same office, as some fathers in the fourth century seem to have thought; and farther, that all the bishops spoken of in the fore-mentioned texts of Scripture were mere presbyters, and of the next order above deacons, which is the utmost concession that can be desired; hence it plainly

appears, that in this age there were three distinct orders of ministers in the Church; namely, that of deacons, another of presbyters, and over them a superior order, in which were not only the Apostles, but also Timothyand Titus, who governed the Churches in which they resided when the above-mentioned epistles were written to them."

Arising out of the uncertainty, whether to claim for the episcopate its authority from the Apostles, or from the line of ordained elders, a good deal of confusion necessarily reigns through the argument. Potter styles Titus an Apostle, and invests him with the office of bishop of Crete, and yet he applies the words of St. Paul—"To ordain elders in every city" (Titus i. 5)—as an authority to create bishops. If the Apostles were a superior order of bishops, and elders an inferior order of presbyters, and deacons another inferior order, then there were three orders of ministers. But if the Apostles were a superior order, and the elders were of two kinds, one of bishops, another of presbyters, then, with deacons, there were four orders. Now, the Archbishop only claims for three orders; consequently, as he finally settles into the conviction that bishops are successors of the Apostles, he should not apply texts to bishops which plainly mean the order styled presbyters. If Titus was bishop of Crete, he wanted no other bishop there; and the text would mean an elder, or presbyter, to each city having a Church or congregation. He applies the words of St. Paul to Titus at page 95; at page 80, he consents to the fact, that the elders ordained by Paul were simple presbyters. He writes—"And it appears the Philippians still remained under St. Paul's government when he sent his epistle to them, in which mention is made of their bishops and deacons, from his taking maintenance of them." Now this two-fold claim upon the texts, which refer to the elders, said to be under the Apostles, must be accepted in one light or the other. We are willing to accept them in the light, at times, come to by the Archbishop, and then confess

with him, that in the Church of Philippi, "allowing their bishops to have been simple presbyters, there was an Apostle, with presbyters and deacons."

Taking this latter view, and assuming, for the sake of argument, that metropolitans are successors of the Apostles, such texts as authorise the ordaining of presbyters cannot apply to them. Where, then, will be found authority for their appointment? We deny such authority; and, from those who claim it, we demand the proof. Timothy and Titus had authority granted them, and these are called by episcopalians Apostles. We intend to shew they were not Apostles; but Apostles or not, they had authority granted them. Timothy was "*besought* to abide still at Ephesus when Paul went into Macedonia" (1 Tim. i. 3). And he was left there not to organize a Church government, but that "he might charge some that they teach no other doctrine." His office was to exhort to a right belief; till Paul returned he was to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, and "not to neglect the gift that was in him given him by prophecy, and by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. iv. 14). His position was not one of rule, he was "not to rebuke an elder;" but it was one of guidance. The gift bestowed upon him he was to cherish for his own sake, as well as for those around him; and it will be observed that the gift was bestowed by prophecy. He had been marked out especially to instruct, to uphold, and to strengthen, infant Christianity; and it will be observed that the gift to him was especially of the Holy Ghost. It is not said *by* the laying on of the hands, but *with* laying on the hands of the presbytery; and it will also be observed that it is not with the hands of the Apostles, but the hands of the presbytery. Now, assuming that a presbyter be an inferior elder, then Timothy, called by episcopalians a metropolitan, was inducted to office by the hands of inferior officers. The mission of Titus, it would appear, was more that of rule; he was left in Crete "to set in order the things wanting,

and to ordain elders in every city," or bishops in every city. The two terms are used synonymously: the very next period says, "For a bishop must be blameless." Now, here would seem an authority for a metropolitan, and an inferior order called bishops; but it is plain from the acts of the Apostles that a perfect equality reigned. And when St. Paul writes to Timothy, and uses the term presbytery, he is meaning a meeting of the elders and chief brethren. Had it been intended that a subordination of ministers should have been the rule of Church government, the higher dignitaries would have been ordained by Apostles, and the relation of this given. Whereas, if we look to every act of ordination recorded we shall find great contrariety to prevail. Apostles lay their hands on deacons (Acts vi. 6); Apostles lay their hands on the Samaritan people (viii. 17); Ananias, a disciple, puts hands on Saul (ix. 17); prophets and teachers lay hands on Barnabas and (again) on Saul (xiii. 3). It is true St. Paul writes of Timothy, "*by* the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. i. 6). Timothy, it would appear, therefore, had a double ordination, by the presbytery and by Paul; and it will be observed the language of the two ordinations differ. Of the presbytery, it is *with* the laying on of hands, and of Paul "*by* the putting on of hands." Paul was an honoured instrument to whom especial powers were granted. The laying on of hands appears to have been an act of benediction, and, when given by Apostles, conferred especial grace.

To claim a continuity of the apostolic office descended through a line of men from the Apostles, is the inner stronghold of episcopacy. Episcopalians contend that the authority and powers granted to the Apostles descend in perpetuity to a line said to be in direct descent. Let us not trouble ourselves as to the terms used to designate these pseudo-descendants. Let us ascertain whether they had descendants, so that yet on the earth we have about us Apostles.

In a sense, all may have a mission from God, or are Apostles;

all may preach His Word; but we are using the word Apostles in the Scriptural sense, as applying to men to whom especial powers and gifts were granted.

Potter gives the opinions of many of the fathers, and as they are brought forward by him he makes them his own. He quotes from Clemens to favour his opinion, that "They who live up to the perfect rules of the Gospel may be taken into the number of the Apostles." And a little further on he writes—"So that here again are manifestly three orders of ministers, the chief of which is the place and office of *the Apostles*" (p. 111). And, again, at page 118, he quotes from Cyprian—"Thence, in the course of times and successions, the ordination of bishops and the constitution of the Church proceeds; so that the Church is built *on the bishops*, and all acts of the Church are governed and directed by them its presidents."

The declaration that the Church is built on the bishops is not only unscriptural, but it is blasphemous. The Church is "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone." It is built upon the Apostles of Christ, and the prophets of Scripture; the former were especially limited to twelve. When, by the defection of Judas, the number was reduced, it was quickly filled up by the appointment of Matthias (Acts i. 26). And in the description of the Church, under the figure of the holy city, we find "the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. xxi. 14). Christ limited the number of Apostles, on whom the Church should be built, to twelve; episcopacy would make them legion.

Potter misquotes Scripture in attempting to prove a higher order of ecclesiastics. Certain persons mentioned by St. Paul as fellow-labourers, Potter calls Apostles who were not apostles.*

* "And there are many examples in other churches of men succeeding in the apostolic or chief order, before the canon of Scripture was finished. Besides Epaphroditus, whom St. Paul calls the Apostle

St. Paul calls Epaphroditus his "brother and companion in labour and fellow-soldier" (Phil. ii. 25). These expressions, which mean no more than an esteemed fellow-worker valiantly advancing the good cause, Potter raises into apostleship. In the same way he applies the language of Paul to Titus, whom Paul styles "a partner and fellow-helper" (2 Cor. viii. 23). These expressions do not amount to the giving either to Epaphroditus, or to Titus, the title of Apostle.

Potter assigns to Titus and to Timothy bishoprics—one of Ephesus, the other of Crete. Now what does St. Paul in 2 Cor. viii. write of these fellow-labourers? Titus went unto the Corinthians from the earnest care for them which God put into his heart; and that he had not alone the care of Crete, but that he was a partner and fellow-helper concerning them; and that he and another brother "were chosen of the Churches to travel with Paul." Paul styles these fellow-labourers "the messengers of the Churches" (2 Cor. viii. 23).

Potter asserts that Timothy exercised authority at Ephesus, not as derived from the people, but as conferred on him by the imposition of Paul's hands. This assertion is quite gratuitous. There is not the slightest evidence of this. The fact connected with the laying on of Paul's hands is not the government of the Ephesian Churches, but "the gift of God which was in Timothy," and which gift constituted him an evangelist (2 Tim. iv. 5). So far from Timothy being left at Ephesus with exclusive government, we find that Tychicus was sent there (2 Tim. iv. 12); and the epistle to the Ephesians would quite discountenance any

(Phil. ii. 25), and the ancient fathers affirm to have been bishop of the Philippians, and others whom St. Paul calls Apostles, and the ancient fathers do, for that reason, speak of as bishops of the Churches (2 Cor. viii. 23), we have a remarkable example in Timothy, who was bishop, or chief governor, of the Church of Ephesus, planted by St. Paul. The authority which Timothy exercised in this Church was not conferred on him by any agreement, or vote, of the people, but by the imposition of St. Paul's hand (2 Tim. i. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14)."—*Potter*, page 93.

such opinion. The Ephesians are addressed as "the saints and faithful;" and they are addressed in this way, not through Timothy, but through Tychicus. For this fact compare the last few verses of the Ephesian epistle with the last chapter of the Second Epistle to Timothy. For a right understanding of the position of Timothy, Tychicus, and others, see Acts xx. Of these partners and fellow-helpers, see also 2 Cor. viii. 19—24.

Now, with respect to the assertion that these fellow-helpers of Paul were Apostles, Scripture does not authorise such an assertion. There are one or two passages which apparently justify it.

There were two persons named Apostles who were not of the twelve; and these having been called Apostles would seem to offer some show of propriety in styling others, eminent for the lead they took, to be likewise styled Apostles. Paul repeatedly calls himself an Apostle, and united in an appointed labour with him; Barnabas is also styled an Apostle. These two were chosen, not by the will of man, but by the will of God.* The

* This principle is recognised by Potter, though opposed to his own line of argument. He does not perceive how it cuts it up, and he unwittingly uses it. He writes at page 201, with reference to the laying on of inferior than apostolic hands upon Barnabas and Saul, "That it cannot be proved that Paul and Barnabas were ordained, at this time, to be ministers. If they were ordained to any office, or ministry, it must be that of Apostles, not only because they are presently after this called Apostles, before they received any further ordination, but also because they were prophets before that time, as was shown in one of the precedent chapters. But this is very unlikely; because this rite of imposing hands, whereby other ministers were ordained, *was never used in making Apostles. It was a distinguishing part of their character that they were immediately called and ordained by Christ Himself*, who gave them the Holy Ghost by breathing on them; *but neither He, nor any other, is ever said to lay hands on them.* When a place became vacant in the apostolic college, by the apostacy of Judas, the Apostles, with the rest of the disciples, chose two candidates, but left it to God to appoint whether of them He pleased to take part of the ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell. Neither was St. Paul inferior to the rest of the Apostles in this mark of honour; for he often asserts himself to be an Apostle, not of men, nor by men, but immediately, and without the

Holy Ghost directed "certain prophets and teachers" to "separate" for Him "Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto He called them" (Acts xiii. 2); Barnabas and Saul, or Paul, are therefore called Apostles. They were messengers of God chosen by Him, not impliedly as by vocation, but certainly, directly, and undoubtedly.

Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians gives some room for a belief that other than Paul and Barnabas and the twelve were styled Apostles. In the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which is said to proceed from Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, we find it thus written (chap. ii. 5, 6)—"For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet others, when we might have been burdensome, as the Apostles of Christ." From these words it would seem that Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus, are styled Apostles. Is this so? In this second chapter Paul alludes to the treatment he had met with at Philippi, and he uses the pronoun "we" here, as throughout the epistle; but he cannot be meaning he, and Silvanus, and Timotheus. Silvanus and Timotheus were not with him in his suffering at Philippi. Silas was his fellow-labourer and fellow-sufferer there (Acts xvi. 19); consequently, though Paul uses

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intervention of men, to have been appointed by Jesus Christ, in opposition to those who denied him to be an Apostle, as was shown in one of the former chapters. But then it will be asked, for what end Paul and Barnabas received imposition of hands? To which it may be answered, that this rite was commonly used both by the Jews and the primitive Christians in benedictions."

Perhaps no passage could have been extracted which more forcibly shows, indirectly, by the doubts it creates, and the questions which arise, against the point Potter is arguing. Having shown previously, as he thinks, that bishops are successors of the Apostles, he is now arguing that the right of ordination alone belongs to them. It does not occur to him, that if Apostles "are ordained by Christ Himself," that no ordination of man constitutes apostleship; and, as Christ has ceased to ordain openly, there are not now on earth Apostles who ordain.

the plural pronoun, he is not meaning Silvanus and Timotheus. This is apparent again (chap. iii. 1) wherein he writes, "We thought it good to be left at Athens alone." Throughout this chapter it is plain he frequently uses the plural when he is meaning himself, as is practised in our day to express modestly oneself; that Timothy is not called an Apostle is understood by 2 Cor. i. 1, wherein Paul marks the distinction between him and Timothy. He writes, "Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother." If Timothy had been an Apostle, this distinction would not have been drawn; the language probably would have been, Paul and Timothy, Apostles of Christ by the will of God.

Neither Silvanus, Timotheus, Epaphroditus, or any styled fellow-labourers, except the twelve and Barnabas and Paul, were Apostles. Paul and Barnabas, beside the twelve, were Apostles. Let us enquire why.

The Church has for foundations twelve Apostles. To preserve its unity of character, and likeness to the pattern or type, the foundations are limited to the names of the twelve Apostles. As the Hebrew polity was built upon the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob, the heads of the literal Israel, so the Christian polity is built upon the sons of Christ, or the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. These can neither be increased or diminished (Rev. xxi. 14). Other foundation than that Christ hath laid can no man lay. To introduce other foundations than these is to disturb the unity and harmony of God's Church. Notwithstanding this we find the Scriptures to declare that Paul and Barnabas were Apostles. In what sense were they Apostles? They were not of the Apostles on whom the Church is built. After the lot fell upon Matthias to fill up the vacancy made by the defection of Judas, the names of the twelve were made up once and for ever. Paul and Barnabas were not of the twelve forming the foundations. The Church is not built upon them, much less upon a line of men many of whom have been in name only Christians.

It may be observed that Christ came first "to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." He came to build up the House of Israel, but He came also to fulfil the promise to Abraham, "that in Him should all nations of the earth be blessed." The Gospel was first preached to the literal Israel; but when Peter was told to call nothing unclean, the time had arrived when the spiritual Israel should be enlarged by the ingathering of the heathen nations. Among them was God's voice to be heard. The Gospel was to be proclaimed to them, and in accordance with the Hebrew pattern, God chose two witnesses to testify of Him to them (Deut. xix. 15; Isa. xliii. 10). Paul and Barnabas were chosen for this work. They were separated from the other disciples especially for this office (Acts xiii. 2). As soon as it was announced to Peter that he should call nothing unclean which God had cleansed, so soon did the Holy Ghost appoint Barnabas and Saul as the witnesses of God to the Gentiles (Acts xi., xii., xiii). The Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul and Barnabas, as the gospel of the circumcision was committed to the twelve (Gal. xi. 7—9). Paul and Barnabas are therefore called Apostles. Christ was called an Apostle (Heb. iii. 1). He was a messenger from God, so the twelve and Barnabas and Paul were messengers direct from God. Paul and Barnabas were especially chosen as messengers and witnesses to the Gentiles (Gal. i. 15—17; Rom. xi. 13; Acts xxvi. 16).

Potter attaches importance to the angels of the seven Asiatic Churches being addressed in the Revelation, as significant of apostolic metropolitan ecclesiastical rule. We think it is not intended thereby to convey any such meaning. Imagery is used symbolical of the whole number of eastern Churches, and of the whole number of the elders representing these Churches. In accordance with the imagery when a Church is addressed, the singular number is used, as addressed to the angel of that Church, but the whole Church is meant. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." The star or

angel of a Church is a figure to represent an embodiment of the chief and guiding principles. This is apparent in all the addresses. In the address to the Church of Smyrna we find the singular changed into the plural. "Fear none of those things which *thou* shalt suffer; behold the devil shall cast some of *you* into prison that *ye* may be tried." It may be answered the "you" in this passage refers to some of the angels, and not to some of the Church of Smyrna, but this is most improbable, each address is evidently to the whole body of members of each divisional Church, though each and every address is intended for all the Churches. The imagery employed in these addresses follows after an uniform plan of the whole apocalypse. The angel of a Church no more represents a metropolitan bishop than a beast in the seals represents an individual character, or than the beast from the sea represents some one individual, or the angels in the trumpets represent separate individual angelic beings, or, the woman clothed with the sun represents a female, or, Gog and Magog represent two great fellows, as personified at Guildhall. The whole book is figurative, and the personifications represent great leading principles and facts connected with the progress of God's word over the face of the earth. The stars or angels in the right hand of "the first and the last," present no authority for prelatical government.

In the enumeration of the several features or leading characteristics of the Church, "governments" is all but the last. This is conformable to the whole teaching of our Lord. The last command to the disciples was not Go, govern all nations, but "Go, teach all nations." If the Apostles had authority to rule, it was not the authority of absolutism, excluding the voice of the people, but that of persuasion, of expostulation, of guidance. The great object of Christianity is to make known to the uttermost parts of the earth the salvation of man through the mediation of Christ, and while teaching this great truth to gather into His fold all that will enter therein, baptising them, or

putting His name upon them, that they may be recognised as belonging to His kingdom.

The principle of government is not that of exclusive or arbitrary rule. When it was asked of our Lord, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The reply is, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as a little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 4). And again, when the mother of Zebedee's children desired pre-eminence for her sons, Jesus called the disciples and said unto them, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. *But it shall not be so among you:* but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister," not ruler, "and whosoever will be chief among you, *let him be your servant:* even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 25—28). No language can be more conclusive against dominion in God's Church, either spiritual or temporal, than this. Again, the principle of equality is enforced in the 23rd chapter. The scribes and pharisees make large pretences of sanctity, and "enlarge the borders of their garments," but "they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne upon men's shoulders, and they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." These men "love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief seats in the synagogue, and greetings in the markets, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ; *and all ye are brethren,* and call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." It is true that St. Paul advises in the selection of an elder, "one that ruleth well his own house;" but to rule well is to guide well. It is to be the master, who, out of love, watches over the members of his household. It is to be solicitous for all. It is to watch over all,

and to be diligent and feed the flock. It is not to be a master in the arbitrary sense in which it is used, as for a "prince of the Gentiles." Among Christians there is but one master, and all beneath are fellow-servants. "The faithful and wise servant whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, must give to his *fellow-servants* their meat in due season" (Matt. xxiv. 44—49). The rulers over God's household are stewards of the mysteries of God, and therefore should be "apt to teach." They are not rulers in the imperative sense of that term; they are fellow-*servants* of one household.

The elders, or bishops, of the New Testament were the most orderly and pious men of each Church or congregation, as were the deacons also; they were chosen for their general characters as pious, honest, good men, summed up in the words, "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. iii. 9).

Neither elders or deacons were ecclesiastics. A clergy order, as a separate class, is altogether foreign to Christianity. Faithful believers are "kings and priests" in right thereof (Rev. i. 6; 1 Peter ii. 5). Christ hath made all Christians priests; they have free access to God, and may hold immediate communion with Him; they need no intercessory human priest. Men are brought nigh unto God by the mediation of the one man Christ Jesus, gone into the heavens, in whom the law was fulfilled once for all, "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," and who came and preached peace, whereby, through Him, we all have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Eph. ii. 13—18). He fulfilled the condition by which He has made us a "nation of priests." Accordingly, in the apostolic Churches were no appointed ministers; it appertained to all to teach and to minister who possessed within themselves a sufficient ability. The elder was to be chosen, having "aptness to teach;" in other respects being found suitable. But ministering and teaching were not confined to him (1 Cor. xiv). Deacons, also, were chosen for their

general suitability and grave character for a wholly secular office; but they did not limit themselves to the duties of this office. Either elder, or deacon, or brother, taught and ministered as occasion required. The elder presided, that all things may be done decently and in order (1 Cor. xi.; the Acts throughout).

The elders of the New Testament have their type in the elders of the Old. As the elders of the Hebrew nation were not a priesthood, so the elders of the Christian are not a separate priesthood. As the elders of the Old were rulers over the tribes, so the elders of the New are rulers of each assembly or Church. As in the Hebrew dispensation there were seventy elders (Ex. xxiv. 1), so in the Christian, during our Lord's ministry while on earth, beside the twelve Apostles who were typified by the twelve heads of the house of Israel, there were "appointed seventy other also." The elders of the literal Israel had much despotic rule, but the elders of the spiritual have no despotic rule. The first were "officers and judges" over the people; the latter are servants to minister, and "feed the flock." The office of the one is to the other as the one dispensation is to the other; the one imperfect and despotic, the other perfect, and the members being a brotherhood and having equality. And so it is that under the new dispensation all rule or supreme government is discountenanced, and the commands are, "Go, teach all nations;" "Feed my sheep;" "Preach the kingdom of God;" "He that is greatest among you let him be as a servant."

Notwithstanding the whole current of our Lord's teaching, which so plainly discountenances despotic rule, and which, when exercised, is at variance with the Gospel, we find it written by St. Paul, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves" (Heb. xiii. 17). The rule here meant cannot be arbitrary rule, nor can it be ecclesiastical rule, both of which are foreign to Christianity; it is then a rule which a favoured servant has over fellow-servants. It is a rule comprised within the law of the house. It cannot be a rule contrary to the law of

the house. Now the law of the house is love, is humility, is entreaty; above all, it is to instruct, to feed with spiritual food, for those who rule watch for the souls of the ruled, "as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." The subject of Church government more properly belongs to the last division of our subject. We have entered herein only upon principles, and not upon their practical application. The text quoted with others of a kindred character will have hereafter to be considered. That a misrule has obtained has been made manifest; and that this misrule would have an early beginning St. Paul declares in his charge to the elders of Ephesus, and that out of the body of elders, or bishops, or overseers, should the misrule arise. That "grievous wolves should enter into the flocks," and that out of the body of elders, "of their *ownselves* should men arise speaking perverse things, *to draw away disciples after them*" (Acts xx. 28—30). Ecclesiastics would preach themselves, and not Jesus Christ.

It is worthy of remark that St. Paul, when prophesying of the apostacy of Christian rulers, writes, "Therefore, watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears." These "three years" would appear prophetic of three cycles, or centuries, during which "the spirit of prophecy" would be struggling to keep Christians in the way of truth. If we look into Church history, we find that during the three first centuries the people had great influence. At the close of the third century, it was passing away. At the commencement of the fourth, their authority ceased, and "the grievous wolves began to enter in." The people no longer had a voice in any Church matters until the Reformation; at the Reformation, the influence of the people began again to dawn.

We have sought to establish that in the Church the body of Christ, there is universal priesthood, all having access to God by

one spirit. That as the condition is fulfilled, and the nation made holy by the blood of Christ, so the promise of God takes effect, and the Israel of God is now a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a kingdom of priests (Ex. xix. 6; 1 Peter ii. 9.)* They are all taught of the Lord (Heb. viii. 2). The curse is removed. The spiritual death consequent upon Adam's transgression has given place to spiritual life (John v. 24). "Having made peace through the blood of the cross, Christ hath reconciled all things unto Himself, whether they be things on earth or things in heaven." "This mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, is now made manifest to His saints" (Col. i. 19—29). Man is now restored to communion with his God: before he was banished from His presence, and Cherubims and a flaming sword turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24). There was, or is, no access by man's efforts. God only by Himself gives access. This is the great truth proclaimed in all the typical observances of the Mosaic law. The way to the tree of life is in and through Christ. In Him alone is eternal life. From Him gushes out a stream to fertilize and give vitality to man's proper being. When washed in this stream, the law of commandment contained in ordinances, have no authority, the enmity thereof being abolished (Ephes. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14). Let us, therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith we have been made free. Death is swallowed up in victory, and hath no more dominion over us. He that abideth in Christ shall never taste of death. There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. This is the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are *for the healing of the nations* (Rev. xxii. 1—2).

* How do the Romanists get over this text of their favourite Apostle?

Life in Christ is the Gospel. Taught of this, the life there is in Christ will bear its corresponding fruits. To proclaim the great truth of life to man, wide and far, is a command to all, "Go ye into all nations and preach the Gospel."

It must needs be that offences come, and some there will be engaged in the Lord's vineyard who belong not to the Church. In a great house there are some vessels to honour and some to dishonour: there are some profitable, and some unprofitable servants. In the nominal kingdom will be good and bad: an enemy will sow tares. Some for filthy lucre's sake will preach the kingdom, but these are not wholly to be rejected from the employment. Christ, who knows every heart, commanded the wavering follower to "Go preach the kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 59—62). It is a command that applies universally, "preach the kingdom." The right principle is that it should not be preached for filthy lucre. Paul preached "labouring with his own hands that he may not be burdensome;" but in this busy world, with its antagonist claims, men will be employed especially for this work. In the words of the prophet Ezekiel, "men of continual employment shall be severed out, passing through the land, that the earth may be cleansed" (Ezek. xxxix. 14). The office of the employed is to teach, not to mediate. A mediating, sacramental priesthood, is wholly adverse to Christ. Such presumptive men crucify the Lord of glory afresh, and put Him to an open shame. They lay again a foundation of repentance from dead works (Heb. vi. 1—6).

The simplicity of the Gospel was soon mystified. The sow returned to her wallowing again: though dragged from the mire, she preferred a return to filth. Man's conscious depravity has always tended to a "righteousness over much," and he has "sought out many inventions." The simplicity of the Gospel offends. In the ignorance of the past a separate priesthood established a position which belongs not to them. They maintain this position by preaching themselves and the necessity

of their intervention, and the impossibility of an approach unto God without their aid.

St. Paul predicted, as we have seen, the apostacy of the rulers. He foresaw that an evil change would take place after his departure, that the office of elder would be abused, its proper character changed, and that by the efforts of its own body. In like manner, the Hebrew prophets predicted the defection of "the shepherds of Israel." It is a great mistake to suppose that the prophecies of the latter Hebrew prophets, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, &c., refer to the former house of Israel. They refer almost exclusively to the present house, or the spiritual Israel, and if for a moment we give our thoughts to the subject, this will appear reasonable. They wrote when the first house was being brought to desolation, never again to be restored. The Hebrew polity was about to cease, and the prophets were employed to foretell this, and the progress of the new dispensation. Their writings, therefore, almost wholly concern the new order of things. The very first chapter of Isaiah opens with the early condition of Christianity. This is predicted by the term "Daughter of Zion," used in the eighth verse. When divines meet with the terms Jerusalem, Judah, Israel, and the like, they do not perceive that they are employed figuratively. They have yet to learn that the Hebrew polity furnishes imagery to supply Scripture language. They perceive it in part, but they do not recognise it as a comprehensive whole. Thus they misunderstand the prophetical language. This is a subject which demands a whole book for its elucidation. I content myself at present with these few remarks, and refer my readers to some of the Hebrew prophecies which are intended to concern the present rulers, or guides of the Israel of God. (See Ezek. xxxiv; Zech. x; Isa. lvi, lvii, lviii; Micah iii; Jer. xxiii). In the words of Ezekiel "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that

are fed;* but ye feed not the flock." "With force and with cruelty have ye *ruled* them."

It must be remembered that Christianity contemplates an instructed people; they that believe "shall be taught of the Lord." In this condition they are priests unto the Lord, and a clergy rule, or clergy mediation, is utterly opposed to Christianity. In the ignorance of the past may probably be found extenuation for the past. God "doth let, and will let, until that wicked be revealed." God permitted a delusion, and man is too prone to selfishness, and self-aggrandisement, and lust of power, not to seize with avidity the smallest apparent authority to usurp. It is probable that a clergy rule was suited to a state of general ignorance. In this we perceive the heavenly beauty of the construction of the Gospel Scriptures; they are fitted to either a rude or a highly polished and instructed condition of mankind. As increased light is afforded, they open to view increased knowledge of the wisdom of God. In a state of ignorance men are unfitted for self-government or self-guidance, and the Scriptures are so constructed as seemingly to authorize controul and rule. In a state of ignorance men need to be governed and directed; but when the fullness of time arrives that knowledge is increased, and "all know the Lord from the least to the greatest," then are they fitted for the higher condition of humanity which the Gospel contemplates.

In the past the clergy have sinned in ignorance, but in the amount of their sinning there are degrees. Some have erred under delusion who yet have devoted to a good purpose the capabilities of their usurped position; but there are others who loved not the truth; to whom, when made known, it was hateful,

* As in past times, and even now, papists feed not the flock with spiritual food, and those that are fed therewith they kill. The Word is withdrawn, and when, in spite of opposition, the truth is obtained, the malice of Christ's adversaries has been, and is still exercised.—See recent accounts from Italy.

and "who had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12). The lust of power, the covetousness of a sordid heart, the glittering tinsel of scarlet and purple and fine linen, the greetings in the market, Rabbi, Rabbi,—these and all their attendant concomitants led the way to blinded minds. But delusion is gone. God is uttering His voice in trumpet blasts over the face of the earth. Sturdy hands and hearts, under the guidance of God, are laying priestcraft low; but ye whose hearts are right with God be not offended. Sin in ignorance a merciful God looks upon with compassion. Give the Lord the heart, and offences vanish. He is saying, "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." "If thou shalt return, and obey the voice of the Lord, and shall hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, then will He make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good;" but if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, then, "I denounce unto you this day that ye shall surely perish." "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live (Deut. xxx)."

[A pamphlet has just appeared from the pen of the Bishop of Exeter, entitled "The Necessity of Episcopal Ordination." If his lordship designed to overthrow episcopacy, he could not more effectually lend a hand thereto. He writes to uphold episcopal ordination, and gives not a single valid reason for its necessity. It is difficult, nay, I think impossible, to find in his pamphlet one single argument which goes to the proof of the alleged *necessity*. His lordship, or any other person, will oblige if he will point out any one single relevent argument to be found therein. Had any arguments been at hand he would have inserted them. That he has not done so is proof that he at least thinks no valid arguments can be adduced. Such arguments as are produced are derived from the canons of the English Church. His lordship has an undoubted talent for controversy, and he needs not to be told, that laws which regulate a fractional part of a kingdom, or

opinions bearing upon the internal government of the part as a distinctive corporation, held by members of the corporation, afford no arguments for a general standard of laws common to the whole kingdom. The laws which regulate the distinctive corporate body may be tested by the general laws which govern the whole, but the lesser cannot give laws to the greater. The particular laws of an individual body or society cannot give laws to a whole country made up of several societies. To illustrate this position, the municipal laws of a corporation cannot give laws to a kingdom. Just so, the Church of England cannot give laws to Christendom. The Bishop of Exeter would be very unwilling to accept, as a general standard for Christians, the particular laws of any one Church except his own. If the articles of the English Church are to be admitted, why may not the canons and decretals of the Roman, and those of the Greek, and the governing laws of the Scotch Churches. These are no doubt repudiated by his lordship; others in turn repudiate the English canons.

To attain unity, even in secular matters, all must appeal to the higher standard; and to attain truth, as God hath vouchsafed a general standard, all Christians must put aside their particular laws for the general laws vouchsafed. His lordship is sufficiently aware of this; and it is only that there is no authority therein for episcopal clergy government, that he does not appeal to the higher standard. To appeal to the lower standard is but a weak invention. It has passed muster, but it will no longer pass the public scrutiny. It raises a good deal of dust, and people get bewildered, and it has been good generalship for a specific purpose. To scatter dust about will no longer do: people will not form their opinions with blinded eyes.

The title of the pamphlet is a misnomer, and an insult to the understandings of men, and especially to God's pastors invited over to England and afterward denied Christian brotherhood. The pamphlet is an apology for the Church of England episcopate, and should have been so entitled, and as such addressed to the English clergy, to soothe their irritated consciences. And to these it would have been well to have proved from Scripture that the English canons adduced, and the opinions produced to support the conduct of the episcopate, are based on Scripture. The clergy know, that though they have subscribed to the articles of the English Church, they are binding upon them only as they can be proved " by *certain* warrant of Scripture."]

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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

(No. V.)

THE KEYS

OF

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

BY JAMES BIDEN,

MONCKTON HOUSE, ANGLESEY, HANTS,

AUTHOR OF "THE TRUE CHURCH."

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THE POWER OF THE KEYS, AS IT IS CALLED IN ECCLESIASTICAL LANGUAGE, IS NOT GRANTED TO A MINISTRY, BUT IS GRANTED TO THE CHURCH,—THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST.

THE Clergy Church asserts that a divine power was granted to the Apostles, and is continued from them through a line of ordained ministers, called the Clergy, said to be successors of the Apostles. Our Lord declared unto the Apostles, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 23). The questions arising out of this declaration, and two others of a kindred character, are—Was this power conferred alone upon the Apostles? Was it a power conferred upon the Church, and continued through every age?

Before we enter upon the inquiry, which, we hope, will lead to a right conclusion on the subject, let us pursue the plan adopted of bringing along with us the truths already established.

1. The Antichrist of Scripture is a form of opposition to Christ, not extraneous to Christianity, but a something intimately blended and connected therewith. It is a false Church, claiming to be the true Church. In the figurative language of Scripture, it is the harlot claiming the position of the lawful bride.

2. The true Church is a body in spiritual union with Christ, which, by partaking of the righteousness of Christ, and by reason of union with Him, the members thereof are held to be sinless,

and the Church, as a whole, declared to be "holy and without spot or blemish."

3. The nominal kingdom of Christ, composed of good and bad, held by divines to be the Church, is not the Church in union with Christ.

4. In the Church is universal priesthood. In the nominal kingdom is a ministry, not forming a separate class, all Christians having a common brotherhood; the present distinction of clergy and laity being foreign to Christianity.

Having arrived at these several conclusions, we cannot do otherwise than cast overboard the claims of a separate class, styling themselves successors of the Apostles. The promises and gifts to the Apostles were either limited to the Apostles, or they received them as parts of a whole body, of which they were members, and to which body the gifts were generally given. There are no successors of Apostles, and if given only to Apostles, they have ceased to be gifts of the Church. But if the Apostles received them only in common with the faithful, and the promises apply to the faithful, then are they continued to the Church. On examination, we shall find they were given to the faithful—the Church at large.

Throughout the Gospel are many promises to the faithful, but in three instances only were the words used from which the Clergy Church claims her usurped power.

1. To Peter our Lord said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 19).

2. The same declaration is made, saving the gift of the keys to Peter, in our Lord's discourse concerning His "little ones," when He instructs them how to behave under provocation. They are enjoined to use personal remonstrance, and if this be unsuccessful, to "take two or three witnesses," that in "the mouth of these every word may be established;" if this prove

unsuccessful, then, as a *dernier resort*, to "tell it unto the Church," and the promise is here made, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvii. 18).

3. The like declaration is again made after the resurrection of our Lord. He said unto the disciples, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 23).

Of all the memorable words of our Lord, none have been so abused as have these. They teach a doctrine for the comfort and the strength of the Church, and they have been made a handle for ecclesiastical exaction. Upon them has been built a system of horrible misrule. God intends them for nourishment, and the devil has turned them to poison. Upon them Satan built an ecclesiastical edifice, and called it the Church; and with them he engendered both priestly and political tyranny.

Our former inquiries have led us to discover that the Church is independent of a clerical order as a governing body; that any such body assuming to govern, is utterly foreign to Christianity, and the enemy of Christ's Church. If this be an established truth, what becomes of priestly absolution? the power claimed by priestcraft exclusively to bind and to loose? If there be no other than a spiritual priesthood, how comes it that a man-ordained priesthood claims a power to forgive sins? It has arisen from this, that the man-ordained priesthood has usurped a power granted to the spiritual priesthood, by being presented before the world as its representative. In this guise, ordained priests have claimed prerogatives which belong only to the true priesthood—Christ's faithful ones. The ordained priests claim to be priests unto God, and exclusively to administer in things spiritual. This separated body claims to act for the general

body of Christians. They will not perceive that a levitical mediating priesthood ceased when the Great High Priest Christ was made "a surety of a better testament." He, the perfect High Priest, after the order of Melchizedec, supplanted the former High Priest, after the house of Aaron. Our Great High Priest "needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once when He offered up Himself. For the law maketh High Priests which have infirmities; but the word of the oath, which was *since the law,* maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." St. Paul, in the 7th chapter to the Hebrews, from whence these words are taken, is representing the overthrow of the levitical priesthood, and he argues that "the priesthood being changed, there is made, of necessity, a change also of the law." And he goes on to show that the man Christ, the Priest after the order of Melchizedec, should not be called after the order of Aaron—"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah: of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." This is most conclusive reasoning, and shows that a levitical, ministering, sacrificial priesthood, is foreign to Christianity. No separated body raised up with pretensions of the kind belongs to Christian church government. The power "to bind and to loose" was not given to a separated class; it was given to all Christ's faithful ones, as we shall show.

In my former publication, "The True Church," are a few remarks upon the subject of Absolution; and it is stated that the power "to bind and to loose" is safely left in the hands of God's faithful ones. It cannot be abused. It is based in the very nature of things. The spiritual union which subsists between Christ and His people preserves a necessity for cordial co-operation. To act in opposition to the divine Head, is to proclaim false credentials. To act in opposition to the Gospel, or God's Word, is to stamp the act as proceeding, not from a child of God, but from a child of Satan.

It is not intended now to enter upon the practical application of the doctrine of Absolution. Our object is to convey a right knowledge of the principles involved in the promises and gifts to the Church. The gifts and promises, though granted to a spiritual priesthood, are intended to be practical; and by-and-by, when we get a clear comprehension of the whole divine scheme, we will enter upon the practical application.

In the past, the promises of our Lord have been made to subserve almost unmitigated evil. It is true they have been employed to quiet sometimes a burdened conscience, but they have been chiefly worked as a machinery for raising sacerdotal power. Sacerdotalism is receiving successive blows, and will shortly be in the throes of death. The funeral dirge over the defunct body will not be mournful. A few short years, and all mankind will rejoice over the extinction of an usurped power, whose history is filled with the crimes of the spurious body. It is matter now of deep rejoicing, that mankind will be released from the heart-sickening notions about Purgatory, the often fatal consequences to families to obtain Indulgences, the scandal and infamy of these things, the crimes resulting from, and the schemes connected with, the Confessional.

To arrive at a just conclusion with regard to the words of our Lord, we have to consider whether they were intended in their application to be limited to Apostles, or whether they were not intended for the whole Church?

Divines affirm they are limited to Apostles, and thus limited to the Clergy, who, they say, are descendants of, or are Apostles. With respect to descendants of Apostles, nothing more need be urged to show the utter fallacy of prelatical reasoning. We will now proceed to show that the promises and gifts of our Lord were not confined to Apostles, but are intended for all the members of His body—the Church.

The words of our Lord were used, as we have seen, on three separate occasions:—first, to Peter; secondly, in the discourse

concerning Christ's little ones; thirdly, to the disciples after the resurrection.

If the promises were intended to apply exclusively to the Apostles, we may expect to find some evidence of this in the discourse concerning Christ's little ones. To this discourse, then, we will give our attention. There is a beautiful harmony reigns throughout the Scriptures. There are antitheses, but no contradictions. Every part is subservient to the whole. When we think we discover discrepancies, it is that our vision is feeble; with increased light contradictions vanish. If Christ intended power to be given alone to the Apostles, the Gospel scheme will harmonise therewith.

It will be observed that the discourse opens with a question from the disciples, who came unto Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt. xviii. 1.) The narrative of Matthew does not herein agree with that of Mark, nor of Luke. Mark and Luke agree in representing that "Jesus perceived the thought of their hearts"; and Mark writes that, when asked, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? they held their peace." In this seeming discrepancy the probability is that Matthew was not concerned in the dispute. He makes, therefore, no mention of it; but, believing the question asked, he so records. In a matter unimportant the Spirit of God interferes not. There is a purpose served by the dissimilitude of the narrative. It proves that there was no collusion, or comparing of notes, among the writers, and testimony to this is valuable. When I assert there are no contradictions, I mean as it regards fundamentals.

"The question," as stated by Matthew, or "the thought of the hearts," as narrated by Mark and Luke, followed soon after the declaration to Peter. Most probably much conversation had arisen among the disciples as to the intent of the declaration. Our Lord took an early opportunity to correct any false tendency which the declaration may have. It had evidently begun in the

minds of His disciples. It was a favourite notion of the Jews that Christ would reign personally on earth, and the declaration to Peter seemed to favour that notion, as assigning to him a favoured position. Christ, therefore, takes an early opportunity to disabuse their minds, and to teach them humility. They began to look for dominion—He taught them that to serve was their mission, and demanded of them obedience and humility. He set a little child in the midst of them, and said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Having thus far cast down their pretensions to superiority, our Lord pointed out to them their proper course in this world. "It needs must be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." He exhorts at all times to brotherly love, but in this discourse He proceeds to enjoin the conduct proper to be pursued under provocation. But that the teaching was not intended alone for the disciples, He says, "*Whoso* shall receive *one such* little child in my name receiveth me. But *whoso* shall offend one of these little ones *which believe in me,* it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." He proceeds to discourse about the little ones that believe in Him, and, by the parable of the lost sheep, shows that the little ones refer to all of His flock. Having brought them to this apprehension, He directs the course of His people. At the close of the discourse, by another parable of the unmerciful servant, it is seen that the whole applies to His people in every age.

The words, therefore, used in this discourse—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"—are not intended to apply only to Apostles. They are immediately followed by the declaration of Christ, that "where two or three are

gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them." They plainly also apply to the previous injunctions, and concern those who are acting them out. To understand, therefore, what are the injunctions, and who are the parties concerned, is important.

Our Lord directs, "That if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Now, what is the meaning of our Lord with regard to the course He enjoins upon His people? The two first steps are clear enough. An aggrieved party is directed to go and tell the man who has trespassed against him. If this avail not, then take two or three witnesses that "every word may be established before them," that the witnesses may exhort to a right conduct. Should this prove unavailing, "tell it unto the Church." The question arises, what is the meaning "tell it unto the Church?"

Tell it unto the Clergy, answers the ecclesiastical Church. Tell it unto the Church, or a community of believers, or a congregation of Christians, is the reply of the Gospel.

In a primitive congregation of Christians, when men had all things common, the voice of the people or brethren was heard in every matter pertaining to the community. Out of the community an elder and deacons were elected "chief men among the brethren." In any matter of dispute, the chief men among the brethren would be elected to adjudicate: not the elder and deacons alone, but by advice of the elder, and consent of the

brethren, any of the leading brethren may be appointed to sit in judgment over the matter in dispute.

In the discourse before us, our Lord is supposing a Church as composed of many faithful believers. Granting this supposition to be correct, and that faithful believers are appointed to determine the matter, then "whatsoever they shall bind on earth He will bind in heaven, and whatsoever they shall loose on earth He will loose in heaven."

This is confirmed by the immediately succeeding verses, wherein the further promise is given, "that if two of you (two of the faithful) shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of His Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them."

That there may be no mistake as to the kind of request, or as to the character of the two or three met together, Peter is led to ask the question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother trespass against me and I forgive him—till seven times?" This question gives rise to further enlightenment upon the subject of binding and loosing. Decrees are to be tempered with mercy. Jesus replied to Peter "I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven." Continuously, ever, forgive. And then, by the parable of the uncompassionate servant, our Lord shews the wickedness of not forgiving when forgiveness is asked. To the uncompassionate servant the Lord "forgave a great debt, even ten thousand talents"; but this servant "went out and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him two hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest." And though his fellow-servant besought him, saying, "Have patience with me and I will pay thee all," he would not, "but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt." Our Lord, by this parable, taught who they were not, who, when met together in His name, sought His sanction to their deeds. They who, like the uncompassionate servant,

have unforgiving tempers, would exact to the full what they conceive to be their own, have no compassionate love, are not them with whom He promises to be present to confirm their acts. So far from this, the Lord declares to the uncompassionate servant, who represents a class: "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

It demands our observation that Peter is the man to elicit this teaching. The very man through whom the Clergy Church claims all her power, is the man by whose instrumentality the Church is rightly instructed. As if to rebuke the uncompassionate practices of the followers of Peter, Peter is led by the providence of God to elicit the teaching which condemns them.

Any person in whom is an unforgiving temper, an uncompassionate heart, an unchastened disposition, our Lord taught by this parable is not one of His. To such an one, so far from conceding what may be asked, He declares He will exact from him all that is due. He will let the law take its course. He will not forgive. He will not redeem so unsanctified a person from the rigid requirements of the law. To such an one the promises of our Lord do not belong. With assembled ones composed as a class of the character of the uncompassionate servant, He does not promise to be present. The promise applies to the faithful in Him.

The promises and gifts to the Church are encircled with conditions. The conditions imply unity with Christ, and unity of purpose in the faithful. "Two or three gathered together in His name, agreeing as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be granted them." Thus guarded, the power to bind and to loose

can never be abused. They to whom the promises apply, "have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 16). They are the friends of Christ. They are chosen by Him, and ordained by His Spirit, "that they should bring forth fruit, and that the fruit should remain," and that "whatsoever they shall ask of the Father in Christ's name, He may give to them" (John xv. 16).

It is to those only, chosen by Christ and ordained by Him, His elect people, to whom the promises apply. "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine." And, without union, "ye can do nothing." There is not in any part of the Scripture an intimation that ministerial office constitutes union. The union insisted upon is not union by the laying on of hands. It is union by ordination of the Spirit. And this union is evinced outwardly by keeping Christ's commandments. If the commandments are kept, they give proof of inward conviction, and evidence to an union with Christ. Having union, He declares "ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John xv. 7—17). It is quite certain that the promises cannot apply to those represented by the tares in the parable, "An enemy hath sown them." Condemnation is passed upon them in all our Lord's discourses. The promises, therefore, cannot be meant for them. He could not intend to grant a power to any whom an enemy hath introduced. "A kingdom divided against itself must fall." It is the blade of the good seed, when sprung up, that "brings forth fruit." "The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." It is only to the children of the kingdom that the promises apply. It is true that the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one are to be left side by side "until the harvest," or to the close of the Christian dispensation; but nowhere can it be discovered that Christ's gifts and promises belong to the children of the wicked one. They belong only to the children of the kingdom, the faithful ones in Christ.

That the promises apply in the way explained, is deduced not

only from the discourses recorded in Matt. xviii. and John xv., but every part of the Gospel teaches this great truth. The Sermon on the Mount leads to this conclusion; and the latter part would seem prophetic of the false direction which professing Christians would take (Matt. vii. 15). Herein we learn that those only who bear good fruit, and thus evidencing to their union with Christ, have any part or lot with Him. Our Lord declares, "not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, *have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:* depart from me, ye that work iniquity." If Christ *never knew* those who work iniquity, they can have had no union with Him, though, as they think, they have prophesied in His name, and done many wonderful works in His name. The promises do not apply even to those who prophesy, or teach, in Christ's name, unless they hear "the sayings of Christ, and do them" (Matt. vii. 15—27).

The primitive Churches acted out the intentions of our Lord, as may be found from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. Herein may be learned that the brethren met together to decide matters relating to the people of their Church. It was not a presiding minister, or an ecclesiastic who sat in judgment, but the faithful of the Church. Paul writes, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" And complaining of the Corinthian brethren going to law one with another, he asks, "Is it so that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between *his brethren*"? (1 Cor. vi.) The teaching in this epistle is, that the brethren shall submit their differences

in accordance with the injunctions of our Lord. St. Paul, in the beginning of the chapter, condemns any proceedings at variance with the course enjoined. He writes, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?"

The teaching of St. Paul is conclusive as to the apostolical reception of our Lord's words. The Apostles fully understood their meaning. They knew them to apply to the faithful, and the primitive practice of the Churches accorded therewith. Paul writes, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 4). These words plainly refer to the practice in the early Church of the people assembling together for judgment. They did so agreeably with the Lord's injunction in His name, and in expectation "of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ" being accorded them. And they did so to sit in judgment upon an offender, "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." They excommunicated, or denied Christian brotherhood for a time. They deliver him to Satan, or he is unto them as a heathen until he repent. And they do this for the destruction of the flesh, or the fleshly appetite, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This exhibits the primitive practice. "The saints" referred to by Paul, who execute judgment, are not ecclesiastics, but the faithful. To "tell it unto the Church" is not to "tell it unto ecclesiastics."

The Gospel contemplates a state of society altogether different to that which the world has hitherto presented. It contemplates good-will to man; not an iron rule of despotism, but a loving rule of peace; not a linked community of interests between civil and ecclesiastical despotism, but a community of brotherhood; not that brotherhood called Socialism, which would disturb social

order, and break down the relations of society, but that brotherhood which claims for every human being to have a kindred tie, and which seeks the good of all.

The past doctrine of "Tell it unto the Church," has been "Tell it at the Confessional," "Tell it to the Clergy." How far the past has been what Christ intended, let the Confessional!—let the Inquisition declare! "By their fruits ye shall know them." Let the sins and the blood in these determine whether the Church has her representative in those who administer in them! Are the deeds connected with them so unspotted as to reflect a purity in harmony with Christ's pure and peaceful spirit? Do the entrapping of innocence, the indulgence of infuriated anger, the remorseless infliction of pain, the long catalogue of black deeds of crime, bespeak an union with Christ? If they do, then has Christ been with the perpetrators,—then did He intend to grant to the Church called Peter's Church a power to bind and to loose. But if "Christ hath no concord with Belial"—"if light hath no communion with darkness"—then is Christ not allied to such a Church. The people belong to Peter, if he will have them; they belong not to Christ—they are none of His. The Merciful and the Compassionate hath no concord with men steeped in crime. And yet in the name of the Spotless One they commit every kind of atrocity. For the love of God, as they profess it, they imbrue their hands in blood, connive at pollution, buy and sell and barter in things spiritual, incarcerate the bodies, manacle the limbs, and torture to writhing agony their wretched fellow-men. Those who act out these abominations claim to be priests unto God, and they have the villainous hardihood and effrontery to say that God abets their doings. The promise to bind and to loose, for the discipline of the Church, they say, was granted to them. They are, say they, the vicegerents of heaven, and what they shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what they shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and that if "they shall agree as touching anything they shall ask," it shall be

granted unto them. To them!! To men thus steeped in crime!! To men the lowest in the human scale; the outcasts from the spirits in harmony with God; the infernal spirits among the lost ones!! Oh! my beloved brethren, you who have hearts to feel for others, think of these things—think of the system some of you are assisting to uphold. Think whether crime has any fellowship with the great Gospel truths. Think whether violence is in harmony with a Gospel of peace, and of good-will towards man. Think whether it can be the intention of a gracious God that His kingdom is to be extended by trafficking villainy, and violent blood-thirsty means. Oh! may every honest-hearted man, who, though he abhors this state of horrible misrule, is yet linked by ties of fellowship with the accursed thing, have graven upon his heart with a pen of steel the words of caution and of exhortation, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues."

The advocates of the iniquitous system will tell you that the evils complained of are not to be ascribed to the Church. They arise from the heads holding a two-fold power, civil and ecclesiastical, and are the accidents and chances of disordered society, and are not necessarily parts of the system. They insist that the Church to which they belong is the Holy Catholic Church, the Church bound to Christ as His spouse; and they, as members, are members of His body. Out of her, say they, is no hope of salvation. Through her priesthood alone is communion held with God. All without are pagans and infidels. Her priesthood alone have the power of the keys. They alone are successors of the Apostles, to whom the power was granted. They alone can lock, and no other man open; they alone can open, and no other man shut. They alone have power to bind and to loose. Oh! monstrous lie! and which only has its parallel in the first great lie! And, strange to tell, Satan's power is so permitted to prevail, that he can darken the mind to fit it for the reception of such an unholy falsehood. Permitted by God, Satan's power

prevails over men "who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness." "God sends a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. xi. 12). Blinded by Satan, they lift up their eyes in astonishment when told they are linked to the polluted one. The harlot of Scripture, say they, is Infidelity; the people are God-denying people; Antichrist is a body of persons who deny the divinity of Christ. We belong not to this class. We love God, and we believe in Jesus Christ His Son. "By their fruits ye shall know them," are our Lord's words. And, again, He cautions in the words of the holy St. John: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God."

It may be, nay it is, that many in the Romanist communion abhor proceedings of an iron despotism, and of a vicious teaching. These know well that the Gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus is not to be enforced with torture of mind or body, and they are too enlightened to believe that money can purchase exemption from Divine punishment. These have in them the tenderness, and love, and veneration, due to a peace-enforcing religion. They hate the application of torture, the detention in the dark cell, the privation of light and comfort, the polluted bartering, the repression of opinion, the stifling of inquiry. They would gladly speak comfort to the afflicted. They would gladly shed abroad the Divine light upon a benighted people. But are not these men, by their presence, assisting to keep up a state of things against which every honest mind revolts? Let me ask, can they read the Holy Scriptures of love, and not perceive that the whole system they uphold is hostile to Christ? His precepts are, "If thine enemy thirst, give him drink; if he hunger, give him food." "If a man take thy coat, give him thy cloak also." "These things I command you, that ye love one another." These give the groundwork of our Lord's teaching. Let me earnestly entreat the honest adherents of Romanism, but misguided men, to study carefully the Scriptures, and let them inform themselves about

this momentous subject. Let them read the Revelation by St. John, and obtain the aid of some of the Protestant interpreters, and let them try to comprehend the meaning of the words, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. xvii. 18). And let them look into the prophecies of Daniel, and try if they can learn the meaning of the words, "And he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain" (Dan. xi. 39).

The true import of "Tell it unto the Church," is doubtless to tell it unto the members of a congregation to which an aggrieved person may belong. There are few congregations of which some of the members do not bear fruit akin to the Gospel laws, and mark them out as visible members of Christ's body. Two or three of this class, gathered together in the name of Christ, selected by the Church or congregation, would be the parties to adjudicate. In a meeting of this character Christ promises to be present. If the members of the congregation have not been misled in their choice, Christ will be present, and by His Spirit will direct and guide; and then will the Church mete out righteous judgment.

The power to bind and to loose, as connected with the command, "Tell it unto the Church," plainly has no reference to absolution from general sins. It has wholly reference to a contumacious brother who has openly offended, and who refuses to listen to the voice of rebuke. If he be obstinate, and will not attend to counsel, then let him be unto the congregation as a heathen. Strike him out of membership with the Church until he ask to return, and confesses the impropriety of his past conduct.

As in the power granted in this our Lord's discourse concerning His little ones, so in the same power granted to Peter and to the Apostles, it had in neither instance relation to absolution as a general doctrine.

The doctrine of the atonement is opposed to a doctrine of priestly absolution. If Christ died for all, then can no priestly

will withhold any from Him. If He came to call "not the righteous but sinners to repentance," then sinners are they to appeal unto Him. "The weary and the heavy laden" are they who are invited. The greatest of sinners are they for whom Christ died. It is over the lost sheep, when found, that Christ rejoices. Them that come unto Him, "He will in no wise cast out." "Though their sins be as scarlet they shall become white as snow." They that seek to dwell with Christ will be received and be embraced with open arms. Christ is the door, and if any man enter by Him, "he shall be saved." Heaven is open to all who will enter by the door Christ hath opened for sinners. He is the good Shepherd who careth for His sheep; "nor will He withhold any good thing from them that love Him." His gracious teaching is, faith in Him (John iii. 14—18). And Paul writes, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13). To call is to be received, and when received, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).

To hope for a successful appeal to God through a mediating priesthood, is to hope in vain. Our Lord invites all to come to Him direct. He entreats of all to put their trust in Him. He died for all, and is not willing that one should perish. He desires that doubts and misgivings should be cast aside. He requires all to lean on Him for help. Let the guilty look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and He will in no wise disappoint. He will speak pardon and peace. The guilty need no other intercessor with God than Him. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." A mediating priest or saint will stand in the way, if placed between guilty man and an offended God. Appeal direct to God through Christ. He has taught a simple prayer, which will not fail to reach the Deity. To say in simple earnestness, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," will not be urged in vain.

How unlike this teaching is that of the Romanist communion, which, as Hooker writes, "would make all sores seem incurable unless the priest have a hand in them." The wicked teaching of this idolatrous church we care not to enter upon. It will be sufficient to declare that their absolution, purgatory, indulgences, penances, masses, are based on a tissue of lies, though they may to some be seemingly founded on truth. Those who would wish to come out from her, let them search the Scriptures and learn the truth.

The Church of England is not guiltless in this respect. Being an offshoot from Rome, she has retained enough of the parent stem to be criminal. She has stained herself with some of the pollutions of the harlot. Among the marks may be found those on the subject of the keys. At present, I point to one great error. She holds that absolution may be pronounced by one raised to the sacerdotal office of priest. Her deacons she permits not to read the Absolution Prayer. She has retained so much of the levitical element, as to conclude it improper that any other than a full-blown sacerdotalist should read the absolution. Be a full priest ever so wicked, marking by his conduct that he is not walking with God, so long as he offend not against the canon law, he is not only permitted, but required, to read the absolution. But the deacon, though evidencing to a changed heart, and as living in oneness with God, yet may he not read this part of the service. The deacon has no power to remit sins, says the Church of England. Had deacons no power in apostolic times? Were deacons a body of men in pupilage without power? Stephen, the deacon, we read, "full *of faith* and (therefore) *power*, did great wonders and miracles among the people." She teaches the right doctrine, granting absolution upon expressed repentance for sin and faith in the atonement of Christ. And this is all authoritatively she can do. The doctrine of absolution, so taught, is in accordance with the doctrine of the atonement. But the doctrine of absolution, thus taught, it is competent to any one to declare, ministering or not; and no more than this can an archbishop do.

Divines lay great stress upon the words to Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

The promises which we have been considering, as connected with the discourse narrated in the 18th chapter of Matthew, plainly relate, as we have shown, to a gathering of faithful men. Here is a promise, of a similar character, which was first given to Peter. It could not relate exclusively to Peter. The like promise was made to all the Apostles. The promises to Peter, as regards binding and loosing, were, therefore, common to all the faithful, and was granted to the Apostles as the first fruits to our Lord, and as being the heads of the faithful.

The promises to Peter were not intended to raise him above his fellows. The discourse which so soon follows declares this. It was a prevailing idea with the Jews, and is not yet extinct among mankind, that Christ will come personally to reign on earth. This idea gave rise to the wish of "the mother of Zebedees children," that her two sons may be raised to the exalted position to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left of Jesus in His kingdom. Our Lord taught that the expectation was vain, and at all times repressed any ambitious desires for earthly exaltation. It could not, therefore, be our Lord's meaning when he pronounced the words to Peter, that a princely prelatical rule should be built upon them. Peter knew they conveyed no such meaning, and never attempted to raise upon them a preeminent power.

Neither did the Apostles, as a body, claim from the promises a power to govern. They led, and directed, but did not govern. It is true, they are "to sit upon thrones," but this is intended to convey a meaning very different from earthly sovereignty to themselves and to assumed successors. This promise to the Apostles

was made upon the demand of Peter, who said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; *what shall we have therefore?*" The reply is not earthly dominion, but heavenly glory: "Ye which have followed me, *in the regeneration* when the Son of Man shall sit on *the throne of His glory*, ye also shall sit upon *twelve thrones*, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Our Lord did not mean they were to possess any earthly or even heavenly sovereignty. He meant, that when mankind should truly have received the doctrines of Christ, and He reigned on His throne, and so was honoured by mankind, then they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the tribes of Israel, or, the spiritual Israel, of which the twelve tribes were the type, or Scripture figure. The Apostles are associated with our Lord's kingdom on earth, as are the twelve sons of Jacob or Israel. They have been made the instruments, in God's hands, for the erection of a machinery which shall build up God's Church.* These have each, therefore, crowns of gold on their heads (Rev. iv. 4), and they surround the throne of God on seats clothed in white raiment. When God, therefore, appears on His throne before mankind in His glory, then shall the Apostles also appear in their glory. When Christ shall be acknowledged, the Jews recognize His divinity, and mankind at large bow before the sovereignty of our Jehovah, then the doctrines taught through His disciples shall place them on thrones. This view of the exaltation of the Apostles is the only rational view. The words which follow the declaration of our Lord show that He did not intend any exclusive prerogative of rule. "And

* It is worthy of observation, as before shown in "The True Church," that the language of Jacob to his sons, when gathered together that he may tell them what shall befal them *in the last days*, is predictive. With regard to the views we have propounded as they respect priesthood, hear what Jacob says of Simeon and Levi. "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger *they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall*" (Gen xlix. 5, 6).

every one," said our Lord, "that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first" (Matt. xix. 27—30). The Apostles have no dominion granted them, but when the Gospel light is shed abroad, and Christ truly reigns on His throne, then shall they reign with Him, leading and directing the people Israel.

There is no teaching of our Lord which leads to a belief that He intends a princely rule. The granting of the keys to Peter have a very different meaning to that assigned by prelatists. Our Lord did not mean that He thereby granted to Peter a power to admit to, or to exclude from, heaven any as his will may determine. This seems so evident from the whole teaching of the Gospel, that it appears idle to combat such an absurd notion. And yet has an idea largely prevailed that Peter had this power granted him, and that it is continued to men who claim to be His successors. Hence the origin of infallibility, and hence the practice of the Pope's blessing. Hence the worship given to the creature instead of the Creator. Hence the humiliating posture of even crowned heads in the presence of the Pope. And this monstrous falsehood is backed by the adhesion of millions of men. And they ask, If the Pope preside not over the Church, where is the Church? Be assured that where Peter and assumed successors have been ruling, there Christ hath not ruled. There has not been His Church. They have been worshipped, not Christ. They have sat in the judgment seat, not Christ. They have been "sitting in the temple of God, showing themselves to be God."

What, then, is the true meaning of the words spoken to Peter?

We have seen that the power to bind and to loose was not granted alone to Peter, nor yet confined to the Apostles. It was a power granted generally to the faithful, and which Peter and the rest of the Apostles shared in common with all the faithful. We need not, therefore, say more upon this part of the subject.

Let us inquire into the meaning of the words which were exclusively addressed to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my Church," and "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

"Upon this rock I will build my Church." What did our Lord mean by these words?

He meant, say divines, to build an ecclesiastical Church, founded upon ecclesiastical polity. He meant, says the Gospel, no such thing.

It will be observed that, previously to the declaration of our Lord, Peter had confessed Him. Jesus inquired of Peter, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." We have shown that the Church has not an ecclesiastical order; that an ecclesiastical edifice, or Clergy Church, is wholly foreign to Christianity; and when our Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," He could not be meaning that He would build it upon Peter, as the basis of an ecclesiastical edifice. The scheme built upon this notion, though it has received for ages the support of an idolatrous people, yet has not, by length of usage, acquired thereby the sanction of truth. No part of the Gospel sanctions its adoption. The whole is in opposition thereto. Christ could not, therefore, mean to build His Church upon Peter. No, but He did intend, as the whole Gospel shows, to build it upon a like faith to that which Peter declared. It is the mutual recognition, exhibited by the narrative, upon which Christ has built His Church. As when Peter said, "Thou art the Christ," and our Lord said, "Thou art Peter," so in every age since a similar mutual recognition between Christ and the members of His body is the rock upon which Christ hath built His Church. Peter's confession gave only one of many occasions which Christ took to deliver this truth, and we shall find it, therefore, declared in other parts of the Gospel.

Besides the many texts before produced, which show the close

union and mutual recognition of Christ and the members of His body,* in His many discourses our Lord taught the doctrine of mutual recognition. "I am," said He, "the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John x. 14). By mutual recognition the Church is built up—this is the rock upon which she is built. And, "The foundation of God standeth sure, *having this seal*, the Lord *knoweth* them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19). The sure foundation is the foundation laid by Christ when He said to Peter, "Thou art Peter." It is a foundation so irreversible, that "the gates of hell can never prevail." The Church is built upon a foundation so sure, that the wiles of Satan are rendered totally innocuous. It is the foundation recognized by St. John when he writes, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." No man can come unto Jesus but by God: as our Lord says, "except the Father draw him:" and as He said to Peter, "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." They who know Christ, and are known of Him, compose His Church—"the building made without hands"—"the temple of the Holy Ghost." The faith which leads to Christ, is the faith in every age on which the Church is built. Before in types and shadows, now in reality. It is a faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is a faith with that of the patriarchs of old, who, like Abraham, "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"—the holy city into which nothing entereth that defileth.

God, the Maker: not Peter, nor yet the Pope, nor yet prelacy. Peter was crucified with his head downward, typical of the overthrow of the Church built upon him. Nor yet did God build His Church *upon* Peter, or the Pope, or prelacy. Scripturally and doctrinally He built His Church on the faith of believers. Read the 17th chapter of John carefully, for this truth. The machinery employed is based on the twelve Apostles in the Christian Church,

* See Nos. 2 and 3.

following out in this respect the twelve heads of the house of Jacob in the Hebrew Church. The twelve Apostles have their names, therefore, in the foundations of the wall of the city of God. But the Church is built upon the rock of faith—mutual recognition, mutual love, mutual confidence. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," say Christ's followers, directed by the Spirit of the Father; and Christ replies, "Thou art" (calling each by name, as aforetime to Peter) "mine that the Father hath given me." "All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."

This explanation undoubtedly conveys the right meaning to be given to our Lord's words, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."

Let us proceed to inquire the meaning of the further words, "Unto thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

These words are very distinctive, and apply personally. They would seem to limit the possession of the keys to Peter. It may be, that though they do apply personally, yet the possession may not be limited in him. The keys may be granted to him personally, as being accepted in Christ, and yet only granted to him in common with others.

If the keys have reference alone to the power granted to bind and to loose, their meaning is explained as applied to the power granted to the whole body of the faithful. It would seem probable that their meaning did extend to this, and was not limited in Peter. Peter was not the favourite Apostle; John held this position. Peter we find rebuked sharply immediately after the promise: "Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." In these remarkable words our Lord prophetically denounced, as He prophetically forewarned, against the false interpretation of the words to Peter. They instruct that the atoning sacrifice which Jesus "began to show unto His disciples," would be rebuked by followers of Peter, as Peter "took Christ

and began to rebuke Him." No part of Scripture is meaningless. It is significant that Peter should rebuke Christ upon the subject of the atonement. Our Lord, as a warning to all, and to teach an entire dependence on the efficacy of the cross, said "unto His disciples, if any *man* will come after *me*, let him deny *himself*, and take up his cross and follow *me*." This following of self, or "of the things that be of men," is further alluded to in these words: "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Christ will not permit a divided allegiance. He could not then mean to establish a rival throne.

It may be, however, that "the keys" given to Peter, irrespective of the power to bind and to loose, may have applied exclusively to him; and if so, then the meaning, perhaps, finds an explanation in the dream of Peter, through which agency Peter was made an instrument to throw open the portals of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles.

The keys certainly gave not to Peter any exclusive power either on earth, or in heaven, over the weal or woe of mankind. They could not, therefore, give any to assumed successors.

That the power to bind and to loose was given exclusively to the faithful members in Christ, is manifest from the declarations of our Lord, to be found in John xv. Without an abiding in Christ, no power exists. Without this abiding, our Lord says "Ye can do nothing." "But if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you." Herein is no mention of ordination. The abiding is not that of "once a priest, always a priest." A man may be ordained by the laying on of prelatical hands, and yet not abide in Christ; and "If a man abide not in Christ, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered;" and such an one "can do nothing." The power to bind and to loose certainly rests not within the will of one "cast out as a withered branch," though it be said of him, "once a priest, always a priest."

With regard to absolution, as exercised by a Clergy Church,

the command "Tell it unto the Church," would seem to have no relation thereto. Confession, as the result of contrition, has no connection with the command. The command has wholly reference to the complaint against a brother. The teaching of our Lord relates to the circumstance, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee."

Confession, as the result of contrition, is to be made to God. It was the practice of the Hebrew faithful (Dan. ix. 20), and was inculcated by David (Psalm xxxii. 5). It is true that under the levitical law confession was to be made to the priest, and the trespass offering presented through him. In the levitical economy the priest was a mediator, appointed by God, between Him and His people. The priest was placed as the medium of communication. He was the vicegerent of God (Num. v. 8). And thus it is that it was so sinful to rise up against the priest (Num. xvi.). To confess to the priest, and to offer the sin offering through him, was the levitical law; but this was typical of a time when God Himself should stand as the High Priest. It pointed to the confession to Christ as the ultimatum. The practice presented in figure and type—a contemplated reality. The priest stood for the Lord; and thus we find this language with reference to the recompense of a trespass: "Let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the priest." The priest stood for the Lord. Confession to the priest was intended as confession to the Lord. Under the imperfect covenant, men could only approach to God through the priest. But under the perfect covenant, all the faithful are "kings and priests;" penitential confession is, therefore, made direct to God. Confess thy transgressions "unto the Lord," and He will forgive the iniquity of thy sin (Psalm xxxii.; Luke xv. 18, 24).

The confession, however, in the Hebrew Church, was a very different thing to the confession in the Christian ecclesiastical Church. In the Hebrew Church, the confession was of some conscious sin, from which relief was sought. The confession urged

in the spurious Christian Church, is a disclosure of domestic, political, and personal matters.

No where in the New Testament can a command be discovered to "confess unto a minister." The whole Gospel is opposed to a mediating priesthood, and, of course, there can be no command to confess unto a priest. But there is, also, no command to confess unto a minister. Amid the trials and troubles of life, there is advice to seek consolation in the sympathies of our fellows. "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the *elders* of the Church; and let *them* pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults *one to another*, and pray *for one another*, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James v. 13—16). In this advice it is plain that no individual priest is meant, as one from whom help may be had. The command is in sickness to "call for the *elders*." Elders here do not mean ecclesiastical bishops, nor do they mean ecclesiastical presbyters. They mean the elders, or advanced Christians, of a congregation. Did the advice regard the sending for a minister, as a presbyter of a Church, the word would not be in the plural. That the elders mean the advanced Christians of a congregation, is certain from the words which follow: "Confess your faults *one to another*, and pray *for one another*." The promise, that "if the sick have sins, they shall be forgiven him," is in accordance with all the promises. By his confession, he is evidencing to his union with Christ, and he is made righteous thereby; he is, therefore, entitled to the consolation which the elders are empowered to give; they can assure him, in the name of Christ, that his sins are forgiven him. In this passage of Scripture can no command be found for, "confess unto a minister."

We have shown that there is no separated class, a mediating

body, between Christ and His people; and, of course, there can be no confession enjoined to a sacerdotal priesthood, and there can be no power of granting absolution possessed by any such body. The assumption of such power is the height of presumption, and daringly offensive before God. Sacerdotalists' whole position is false and offensive, and brought about by the agency of the wicked one. It is a result of the enmity to God, which establishes a scheme in opposition to His most Holy Word. The clergy are blinded by the god of this world, and in ignorance they sin against the God of Heaven. They presume to dispense the gifts of heaven, and they do not hesitate to traffic in the things of God. Some are so wicked as in their inmost hearts to ask, Doth God see? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Oh, Lord! Thou knowest what is due unto these, but forgive them, or "the mist of darkness is reserved for them for ever" (2 Peter ii. 17). Awaken in them a sense of their sinfulness. Bring them, as penitents, to Thy footstool, and teach them the way wherein they should walk. Declare unto them Thy truth, that they may preach it unto the millions of their benighted followers. Cast down the kingdoms of this world, and let Thy kingdom come, that Thy will may be done upon earth.

Absolution, as taught by the Romanist communion, is utterly false and valueless. The dictum of any man, or set of men, ordained or not, can avail nothing. Absolution, exercised as a priestly authority, is no where countenanced in the Scriptures. There is a power granted to the children of God to speak authoritatively in His name; but the authority is necessarily limited within the great Gospel truths. To those to whom Christ hath said, "All ye that are weary and heavy laden, come unto Me, and I will give you rest," no child of God dare to say, "Ye shall not come unto Christ without my permission." Where Christ hath not imposed a condition, who shall presume to do so? No true Christian will dare impose a condition if Christ hath not.

Any man presuming to intermeddle between God and His creatures is proclaiming himself, by the act, a hireling of Satan.

The power to bind and to loose is granted to all Christ's faithful followers. To them only has He granted power. With them only does He promise to be present. For the comfort of the members of His body, He assures them of His constant presence and assured approval. And for the assurance of a weak brother, whose conscience is ill at ease, He has given a power to His Church to speak pardon and peace in Christ's name.

With regard to excommunication as an attendant power, it plainly rests with the body of the faithful. To them alone does our Lord's discourse apply wherein the power is granted. It is they who are addressed by Paul, when he is counselling the Corinthians. Excommunication, as exercised by Romanists, with anathemas and cursing, is no where enjoined in Scripture. Cursing or railing, and holding up a fellow Christian to the abhorrence of Christians, is not taught by the Gospel. Quite the reverse: "Bless and curse not." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," is the Gospel teaching (Rom. xii.). If a fellow Christian offend, and "he will not hear the Church," will not hear the counsel offered by the "two or three met together," then "let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican;" that is, let the Christian congregation, of which he may be a member, cease to commune with him until he be brought to a better temper.

Having given, as we believe, a right interpretation of "the keys," and of the power to bind and to loose, we will proceed to consider another matter closely allied—the assumed power to convey the Holy Ghost. In episcopal ordination the bishop does not pray that the ordained may receive, but he authoritatively pronounces "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." They derive authority for this, as they think, from the words of our Lord to His disciples after His resurrection, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this,

He breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 21—23).

It will be perceived that with the Holy Ghost is conveyed the power to bind and to loose. And as episcopalians conceive that a sacerdotal priesthood alone has power to bind and to loose, so they think the Holy Ghost was given for transmission through the line of ordained priests. They think thereby was intended to convey "a holy and a ghostly authority—authority over the souls of men—authority, a part whereof consisteth in power to remit and retain sins." In accordance with this opinion, they attach great importance to the retention of the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," precisely in the form used by our Lord, without addition or subtraction. Without these words authoritatively used by episcopal voice with the laying on of hands, ordained ministers are thought to receive no authority. But with them, when ministers are inducted to office, their acts become the acts of the Holy Ghost. "Whether they preach, pray, baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as disposers of God's mysteries, their words, judgments, acts, and deeds, are not their's, but the Holy Ghost's." *

* "A thing much stumbled at in the manner of giving orders, is our using those memorable words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' The Holy Ghost, they say, we cannot give, and therefore we 'foolishly' bid men receive it. Wise men, for their authority's sake, must have leave to befool them whom they are able to make wise by better instruction. Notwithstanding, if it may please their wisdom as well to hear what fools can say, as to control that which they do, thus we have heard some wise men teach, namely, that the 'Holy Ghost' may be used to signify not the person alone but the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and we know that spiritual gifts are not only abilities to do things miraculous, as to speak with tongues which were never taught us, to cure diseases without art, and such like, but also that the very authority and power which is given men in the Church to be ministers of holy things, this is contained within the number of those gifts whereof

Objectors to the use of these words authoritatively, are supposed by Hooker to think that nothing was conveyed by our Lord when he breathed on the Apostles, and so used them.

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the Holy Ghost is author, and therefore he which giveth this power may say, without absurdity or folly, 'Receive the Holy Ghost;' such power as the Spirit of Christ hath endued his Church withal, such power as neither prince nor potentate, king nor Cæsar, on earth can give. So that, if men alone had devised this form of speech, thereby to express the heavenly well-spring of that power which ecclesiastical ordinations do bestow, it is not so foolish but that wise men might bear with it.

"If then our Lord and Saviour Himself have used the self-same form of words, and that in the self-same kind of action, although there be but the least show of probability, yea, or any possibility, that His meaning might be the same which ours is; it should teach sober and grave men not to be too venturous in condemning that of folly which is not impossible to have in it more profoundness of wisdom than flesh and blood should presume to control. Our Saviour, after His resurrection from the dead, gave His Apostles their commission, saying, 'All power is given me in heaven and in earth: go therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' In sum, 'As my Father sent me, so send I you.' Whereunto St. John doth add farther, that having thus spoken, He breathed on them, and said, 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' By which words He must of likelihood understand some gift of the Spirit, which was presently at that time bestowed upon them, as both the speech of actual delivery in saying *Receive*, and the visible sign thereof, His breathing, did shew. Absurd it were to imagine our Saviour did both to the ear, and also to the very eye, express a real donation, and they at that time receive nothing.

"It resteth then that we search what especial grace they did at that time receive. Touching miraculous power of the Spirit, most apparent it is that as then they received it not, but the promise thereof was to be shortly after performed. The words of St. Luke concerning that power are, therefore, set down with signification of the time to come: '*Behold I will send* the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry you in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.' Wherefore, undoubtedly it was some other effect of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost in some other kind, which our Saviour did then bestow. What other likelier than that which Himself doth mention, as it should seem of purpose to take away all ambiguous constructions, and to declare that the Holy Ghost, which He then gave, was a holy and a ghostly authority,

No one, I presume, who differs in opinion with episcopalians, as it regards the use of these words at ordination, either thinks that nothing was conveyed when Christ breathed on the Apostles and

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authority over the souls of men, authority, a part whereof consisteth in power to remit and retain sins? 'Receive the Holy Ghost: *whose sins soever ye remit they are remitted; whose sins ye retain they are retained.*' Whereas, therefore, the other Evangelists had set down that Christ did, before His suffering, promise to give His Apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and, being risen from the dead, promise moreover at that time a miraculous power of the Holy Ghost for castigation and relaxation of sin, wherein was fully accomplished that which the promise of the keys did import.

"Seeing therefore that the same power is now given, why should the same form of words expressing it be thought foolish? The cause why we breathe not as Christ did on them unto whom He imparted power, is, for that neither Spirit nor spiritual authority may be thought to proceed from us, which are but delegates, or assigns to give men possession of His graces.

"Now, besides that the power and authority delivered with these words is itself Χάρισμα, a gracious donation which the Spirit of God doth bestow, we may most assuredly persuade ourselves that the hand which imposeth upon us the function of our ministry, doth, under the same form of words, so tie itself thereunto that he which receiveth the burden is thereby for ever warranted to have the Spirit with him, and in him, for his assistance, aid, countenance, and support in whatsoever he faithfully doth to discharge duty. Knowing, therefore, that when we take ordination, we also receive the presence of the Holy Ghost, partly to guide, direct, and strengthen us in all our ways, and partly to assume unto itself, for the more authority, those actions that appertain to our place and calling, can our ears admit such a speech, uttered in the reverend performance of that solemnity, or, can we at any time renew the memory and enter into serious cogitation thereof, but with much admiration and joy? Remove what these foolish words do imply, and what hath the ministry of God besides wherein to glory? Whereas now, forasmuch as the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour in His first ordinations gave, doth no less concur with spiritual vocations throughout all ages, than the Spirit which God derived from Moses to them that assisted him in his government did descend from them to their successors in like authority and place, we have for the least and meanest duties performed by virtue of ministerial power, that to dignify, grace and authorise them, which no other offices on earth can challenge. Whether we preach, pray,

pronounced these words, or that it is simply foolish to use them. For my part, I think neither. I am sure something was conveyed, and I believe that it is not simply foolish, but presumptuous, to use them in the authoritative manner our Lord did. It is not that objectors do not rise up to the conception of episcopalians, but they go beyond them. They see in their use a power exercised by our Lord which no mere man can possess. If it may be spoken reverently, a power intransmissible. Episcopalians view the power as exercised by a *man* sent from God, and not as the act of *Deity* itself. They view it as a delegated authority, and, therefore, think it transmissible by delegate. I view it as the act of God conveying of His own Spirit.

With regard to the opinion that it conveyed "holy and ghostly authority over the souls of men," that is disposed of. Our Lord could not mean to convey any such authority. The whole Gospel, as we have seen, is opposed thereto. Because a power to bind and to loose was also given with the Holy Ghost, sacerdotalists arrive at the opinion that it conveyed a ghostly power over the souls of men. Had this power been given only to Apostles, there would have been some reason for such an opinion; but as this was a power conveyed not alone to them, but to all the faithful when met together in Christ's name, so it could not be intended to establish an exclusive power; and, more especially, it could not have been intended to bestow a transmissive power. There is not one word to this effect.

When our Lord breathed upon the Apostles, He did so as God

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baptize, communicate, condemn, give absolution, or whatsoever, as disposers of God's mysteries, our words, judgments, acts and deeds, are not ours but the Holy Ghost's. Enough, if unfeignedly, and in heart, we did believe it, enough to banish whatsoever may justly be thought corrupt, either in bestowing, or in using, or in esteeming the same otherwise than is meet. For, profanely to bestow, or loosely to use, or vilely of the Holy Ghost, we all in show and profession abhor."—ok v., chap. lxxvii. 5 to 8.

the risen Christ. He had completed the atonement as the Man Christ, now He was exercising authority as the God Christ. As such He gave of His Spirit to the eleven Apostles. But He did not alone give of His Spirit to these. Shortly afterward, at the day of Pentecost, He gave of His Spirit to all the assembled faithful. Before He had ascended into heaven, He gave in personal presence by His breath to His Apostles; when He had ascended, He gave to all "in cloven tongues of fire." That He bestows the Holy Ghost upon all the faithful, we are assured by the words of Peter, who, in reply to the demand of the pricked in heart "What shall we do?" said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord God shall call*" (Acts ii. 38).

Peter, in this instance, says authoritatively "*shall receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost," but he does so in accordance with Christ's declarations and the Gospel teaching. Our Lord said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John vi. 44). If the Father draw a man unto Christ, then is he in Christ, and the Father and the Son will take up their abode with him, and the Son will pray the Father, and "He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth" (John xiv). This language of our Lord is the language of Peter. Peter does no more than proclaim the assurance of Christ.

Divines attach importance to the words of our Lord to the eleven as conveying mission and authority. And this undoubtedly they received. But they received no transmissive authority to perpetuate apostleship, and, therefore, never exercised any such authority. In the narration of the interview of our Lord with His disciples, given in the first chapter of the Acts, they inquire, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He replied unto them, "It is not for you to know the times and the

seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be *witnesses unto me* both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts i). Their mission was to be "witnesses"—not rulers. They were to testify of Jesus "unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

We do not find that they exercised an exclusive transmissive power to perpetuate an ordained priesthood. They never pretended to a power to convey the Holy Ghost. Our Lord said to the Apostles, He would be "with them to the end of the world." But this same promise was made to "the two or three met together in His name." It is a promise made to the whole body of faithful. Thus we find the presence of Christ manifested in the acts of the faithful. When Peter and John laid their hands on the disciples of Samaria, "they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts viii). When Ananias, a devout man, a disciple, laid hands on Paul, he received the Holy Ghost (Acts ix). When Peter preached remission of sins, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts x. 44). When Paul laid his hands upon the converts of Ephesus, "the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied" (Acts xix). The Holy Spirit of God, in all these instances, attests the faithfulness of Christ; but they do not afford proofs of an exclusive transmissive power. Far from it. They exhibit a power of the Spirit exercised as "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii).

In none of these instances is there mention made of "a holy and ghostly authority over the souls of men." Nor is there in any other instance.

No doubt the Holy Ghost watched over, and still watches over, the Church, and guided, and now guides, and will continue

to guide, the Church of God. Thus we find the elders of the primitive Churches are said to have been appointed by the Holy Ghost (Acts xx. 28). The Holy Spirit directs in that which pertains to God's elect people; and the appointments which then took place, when the Church was under especial guidance, no doubt were influenced by an operation of the Spirit. And no doubt the Holy Spirit still influences among God's people. To doubt it, is to doubt God's promises. But when the Church fled into the wilderness, God's Holy Spirit could not be influencing in that visible community called the Church, and from which false Church the true Church fled. The Holy Ghost did not, and does not, influence in the appointment of popes, and cardinals, and archbishops, &c., &c., which have no relation to God's Church. The caution addressed by Paul to elders in the text now referred to sufficiently attests this. St. Paul uses not only the language of caution, but that likewise of prophetic condemnation. God's Spirit cannot be present with the proceedings of a body which His holy Apostle prophetically denounces (Acts xx. 28—31).

With regard to any authority for using the words of our Lord in the same authoritative manner He did there is none to be found in the Scriptures. There is no instance on record of their being so used, nor would an instructed child of God dare so to use them. Peter and John prayed that the converts "*might* receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts viii. 15). Though Peter had before declared "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye *shall* receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;" yet, when he employs the words in a ministerial act, he prays that the baptized "might receive;" he does not authoritatively say "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." He could safely affirm to all who repented of past sins, and sought forgiveness in Christ, that they should receive the Holy Ghost, because a faith in Jesus can only be given by the Holy Ghost. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by

the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3). The spirit confession, that Jesus is the Lord, is a result of an operation of the Holy Ghost.

In the ordination of a pastor, or minister, to pray that he "*might* receive the Holy Ghost," would be very suitable, and proper, and scriptural; but authoritatively to say "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," assuming a function which belongs alone to the God Omnipotent, is startling and arrogant presumption. It arises out of the pretensions of a mediating priesthood. No doubt it is a power assumed in ignorance. No doubt that they who pretend to exercise it agree with Hooker, that "profanely to bestow, or loosely to use, or vilely to esteem of the Holy Ghost, they do in show and profession abhor." But this does not save them from acting a great impiety. To convey the Holy Ghost is a power belonging alone to God, and when bestowed, the recipient becomes a member of the Church. The one Spirit unites all the members by a common bond. In this the unity and strength of the Church consists. This operation of the Spirit belongs alone to God, and for any man to dare to exercise an assumed authority, professing it falsely to be derived from God, is "to sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is one of the acts, and exhibits one of the marks of "The Antichrist," and to exercise such assumed power is daring presumption, and awful blasphemy.

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(No. VI.)

BAPTISM.

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WATER BAPTISM, ADMITS TO THE OUTER OR NOMINAL KINGDOM; SPIRIT BAPTISM, TO THE INNER OR TRUE KINGDOM,—THE ONE BAPTISM BEING INDEPENDENT AND IRRESPECTIVE OF THE OTHER.

THE word "baptise," in Scripture, like the word "Church," has manifold meanings; one, as applied to the rite of baptism; another, to the influence of the Spirit; another, to suffering. It is used in the first sense by our Lord, when He said, "Go, baptise all nations." It is used in the second sense by St. Paul, when he writes, "They are all baptised by one Spirit unto one body." It is used in the third sense by our Lord, when He asked, "Can ye be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised withal?"

Divines recognise these several meanings, but they have failed to separate them. They attribute to "one baptism" all these meanings. They apply every expression in connection with the word "baptise" as pertaining to "one baptism." They assume this "one baptism" to be water baptism.

It is our purpose to show that water baptism, Spirit baptism, and a baptism of suffering, have no necessary connection.

Arising out of the fact that every expression in connection with one or other of the three baptisms have been held to refer to "one baptism," the rite has been supposed to cleanse from sin, to give a new birth in Christ, and that faith is essential as a prerequisite to the due reception of water baptism. We intend to show that the popular belief is erroneous.

To elucidate the subject, we propose to consider it under the following heads.

1. We wish to show that baptism has not hitherto been understood.

2. That water baptism does not cleanse from sin.

3. That it does not give new life in Christ; that is, that it does not baptise *into* Christ.

4. That faith is not essential as a prerequisite to a due reception of the rite.

5. To shew the intention of water baptism.

6. To explain the meaning of our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again of water and of the Spirit."

7. In conclusion, to shew from the bearings of the whole, that water baptism admits to the outer, Spirit baptism to the inner or true kingdom of Christ, and that the two baptisms have no necessary connection.

BAPTISM, NOT HITHERTO UNDERSTOOD.

After a lapse of 1800 years, during which the minds of men have been more or less interested and enquiring upon the subject of baptism, for an obscure person to rise up and boldly to declare, and to attempt to prove, that it has not been understood, is a daring manifestation of hardihood. What! after the greatest minds in each succeeding age from the Apostolic have exerted their powers, is the declaration to be tolerated, that all their labours have led to little result? Yes: tolerated it must be; for so it is, that, notwithstanding the greatest intellects have been devoted to enquiry on this subject, they have not been permitted to comprehend it.

But this was not only foreseen, but allowed ignorance has been in fact a part of God's dealings. He has taken away from the past "the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water" (Is. iii); that is, in spiritual things

Christendom has been famished. For wise purposes, as suited to the past, God withheld a full knowledge of divine things. Our Lord declared His kingdom to be a spiritual kingdom. This declaration has been but imperfectly understood. It has been received to mean "a holy and ghostly authority," delegated to a few. Far from receiving it in its literal acceptation, it is held to mean a covenant relationship to God by sacramental signs. Whereas, it means nothing of the kind. It means literally what is declared, that it is a spiritual kingdom. Certain outward signs are connected therewith, but they are not covenant signs. They have relation to a flesh and blood kingdom, and are an appointed medium of relationship in this kingdom. But this relationship is not a covenant relationship. The covenant relationship is of a perfect character, and refers to a purely spiritual kingdom. Not that this spiritual kingdom has no connection with the flesh and blood kingdom. It has connection, but the two are not coincident. The mistake of the past has been in confounding the two kingdoms. Hence the perfect unassailable covenant has been replaced in the world, in the imagination of men, by an imperfect and assailable covenant. They have substituted for a kingdom of grace a kingdom of covenant law.

Men have not sufficiently realized the great fact that they are, while yet on earth, spiritual beings. They think of it, they speak of it, but they do not realize it. They find themselves confined by their fleshly nature to a limited sphere of action, and permit their thoughts to be encircled therewith. They do not rise to the lofty conception that they are even now spiritual beings connected with the Great Father of spiritual life. From this it is that they do not perceive that to be in spiritual harmony with God requires something superior to, and above all, physical and material things; they cannot think of God irrespective of the limits of an earthly consciousness; they do not permit their thoughts to associate them here with a world of spirits; they do not perceive that in the wide world of spiritual

life of which they already form a part (Heb. xii. 22-24), that harmony with God consists not in ritual observances, but in the thoughts and the affections being attuned in love to Him; they have yet to learn that harmonious spiritual life in God consists simply in love to God; they have, perhaps, partially discovered the loveliness of that harmonious beauty which reigns through God's proper kingdom, but this condition they think has no relation to earth; they paint it as something to be, not as something that is. The perfect covenant is referred to a hereafter, and not discovered to be a living reality here among us. True it is that there is much evil in the world, but God came down to earth in the person of Christ to counteract this, and it is declared (1 John iii. 5-14), that it can be countervailed only by a living union with Christ. Now this living union is not by gross material rites, but by the influence of Spirit upon spirit.

Of course, it is not hereby meant that God has not appointed certain ordinances to be observed. Man, as man, is incapable of appreciating a purely spiritual rule, and certain rites are appointed as means of external union; but they do not express or constitute true union. True union brings a man into harmonious fellowship with God. Rites bind men together, whereby they instruct each other in the things of God. To be brought into true union is the end sought by God's teaching. Thus we are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is *in heaven*." A kingdom united by rites, is not a kingdom as "in heaven." Rites assist in setting up the kingdom, but they do not establish it.

To observe commanded ordinances is a duty, but to attach a value to them in themselves evinces great spiritual blindness. This was the fault of the Jews as it is yet the fault of Christians. The latter Israel has erred in this respect, as did the first Israel. It is against the present spiritual blindness that Isaiah opens his book. His condemnations are supposed to refer to the Israel of old; but this is a great mistake. Isaiah employs language and

figures of speech derived from the Hebrew polity, but they are intended to represent a state of things connected with Christianity. The opening chapters of his book concern Christians.* The state of things which has prevailed in Christendom has arisen from mistaking the character of Christianity, and by a retro-

* Isaiah begins his book with "The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning *Judah and Jerusalem*." The terms "Judah and Jerusalem" are supposed to have reference to the Jews, and it is thought that the prophetical language in the first chapter was intended for them.

It should be remembered that there are not two Israels. There are different states of the people Israel. There are believers and non-believers in Christ. The believers constitute the present Israel, the non-believers the Jews. The prophecies chiefly concern the professing believers. Little is said about the Jews beyond predicting their dispersion and future ingathering. The great stream of prophecy concerns "the house of Jacob, called by the name of Israel, come forth out of the waters of Judah" (Isa. xlviii).

"Judah," is a term used for the house of Israel, and means all included in the old and new covenants, unless a distinction is sought to be drawn as in Ezekiel between the ingathered and the outcast (Ezek. xxvii).

The figurative expressions used by the prophets are derived from the patriarchal age, which was designed to convey knowledge to every age. Thus, when Jacob blesses his sons, he does so prophetically. If we refer to the prophetic language concerning Judah, we find it declared that "unto him shall the gathering of the people be." We find, also, this expression, "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass' colt unto the choice vine." In these words "the foal unto the vine," is a prophecy of the second dispensation. The vine, the people Israel; the foal, the younger dispensation, called, in prophetic language, "the daughter of Zion." Our Lord came out of Judah, His imputed earthly parents belonging to that tribe. The language of Jacob has reference to Him and to His people.

"Jerusalem," is a term also to denote the Israel of God. The holy city, new Jerusalem, represents the faithful; Jerusalem, as a general term, represents the whole Israel.

That Isaiah is prophecying concerning Christianity, observe what he says of "Judah and Jerusalem," in the 2nd chapter, which refers to a yet future. The term "daughter of Zion," also, used in the 1st chapter, sufficiently shows for whose instruction he is writing.

gression to a preceding priestly or levitical principle. Christians have given "heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men." They have depreciated the Atonement. They have "gone away backward." They have not understood the doctrines of Christianity. Even some reformed Churches have elevated the two commanded rites to a position to which they are not entitled. The ecclesiastical or clergy Church, more than this, have made them Saviours. If Christians will search the Scriptures with a view to discover any special promises connected with them, they will be surprised what an absence of such there is. When expressions are understood which seem to lead to the conclusion that exclusive salvation is tied to water baptism, it is discovered that they do not mean this. With a few persons the opinion is gaining ground, that salvation is not confined to baptism. The great majority believe that it is.

Conformably with the absence of any promises in relation to the two Christian rites, we find them scarcely imposed in the way of commands to receive them. There is a command with regard to baptism, but the command is not enjoined to recipients. The command is to the administers, "Go teach all nations, baptising them." The recipient, as far as the command goes, is rather passive than active. Again, as to the Eucharist, the command is not at all in the form of the language employed to promulgate the Hebrew rites. Certainly our Lord declared "This do in remembrance of me;" but it is easy to perceive the vast difference between the comparative indefinite language employed, and the absolute precision of that under the law. In the New Testament there is nothing definite with regard to the rites. There is no fixed time, no exact mode, no precise definition of the subjects for baptism. And why is this? Because the Hebrew was a religion of ritual observances; the Christian is emphatically a religion of grace. The former had a strictly imposed ceremonial; the latter has not.

In former ages, when uninstructed man had not reached to a

knowledge of nature's laws, and could not rise to a perception of the God of nature, and though told by God, through the patriarchs and Moses, of His existence, yet needed to be constantly reminded thereof, God imposed a ceremonial law, not for any inherent virtue in ceremonial observances, but to aid man in preserving a knowledge of God. These observances, in types and shadows, proclaimed the purity and holiness of God, and of spiritual life in harmony with Him. Man in his then state of ignorance could not understand the glorified condition of which his nature was capable. It was needful to impose some definite material rites of which his senses could take cognizance. Even with these helps, and the repeated revelations of God, the people were continually falling away into idolatrous worship.

But when God came upon earth in the person of Christ, and instructed man more fully in His righteous laws, a ceremonial law was utterly abolished. Purifications and propitiatory sacrifices were set aside. They had been established as a necessity arising out of man's ignorance. They were put away when it was intended he should be better informed. The Gospel, therefore, imposes no ritual observances in the shape of commands to receive them. The language concerning them, instead of being peremptory, is instructive.

A return to the supposed efficacy of ceremonial rites has been the sin of Christendom. Faith in baptism administered after some prescribed mode, reliance upon propitiatory offerings of masses, an attention to forms and ceremonies, dependance upon the prayers of priests, and saints, and others, all proclaim the fact that "Israel doth not know, God's people doth not consider."

Though God came on earth and instructed man more fully than He had done before, yet, to preserve among mankind a knowledge of God and of His righteous laws, it was needful to establish an external kingdom called by His name, and for this purpose two simple rites were ordained. One whereby men should be named after the God of heaven, and thus nominally

allied to God; and another commemorative of the sacrifice "once offered for the sin of the whole world." In themselves very simple and very unmysterious, but shadowing forth two great mystical truths—the cleansed nature of man, and its incorporation with Christ. We, like the Jews of old, mistake much the object of rites when we suppose them to stand for the mystical truths. They bear a distant image to them, but they are no more them than an image is the substance. True harmonious union with God is of the Spirit, and no visible or outward act is intended to effect it. To expect that it would is contrary to the sense we have of what constitutes spiritual life, and contrary to the Gospel teaching.

Herein have Christians erred. As Israel of old worshipped false idols, so has the new Israel departed from the truth and worshipped idols. The writings of the Prophets are levelled against this state of things. Though we who are Protestants do not literally err by sacrificing as of old, yet a priesthood set up by false principles which established the Clergy Church literally err in this matter, "The Prophets have prophesied falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and God's people love to have it so" (Jer. v). The priests, and through them the people, bring "vain oblations to the Lord." Though as Protestants we do not literally sacrifice "in the blood of bullocks and of lambs," we grossly offend in the spirit of Isaiah's denunciations. We offend when we confide in outward acts for justification. Even "the solemn meeting becomes iniquity." Like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, we may offer "a multitude of sacrifices," observe appointed "feasts and fasts," and yet be far removed from righteousness. God declares that puritanical observances are hateful to Him, and by this is intimated that more or less of iniquity invariably accompanies the over-estimation or puritanical observance of a rite. The heart which depends upon a ritual is not right towards God. It is that state which seeks out "many devices," and strains at a "righteousness over much." "The

perfect love which casteth out fear" is not known to it. The dependence upon rites is a non-dependence upon the one sufficient Atonement.

In the past, when death reigned triumphant over the earth, God revealed Himself to the favoured descendants of Abraham, and appointed a ceremonial law which typically should give life to men.

Under the Christian dispensation God revealed Himself more fully, and taught that in Him alone was life, and that ceremonial observances could not convey it. Thus nothing precise and definite is laid down with regard to the two Christian rites. "Let all things be done decently and in order" is the rule, and if this be observed, nothing more definite is commanded. If the two simple rites had been intended, as some contend, to be the sole channels of grace, is it not reasonable to suppose they would have been enjoined in more specific language.

Christ "abolished the law contained in ordinances," Eph. ii. 15, Col. ii. 14; and, notwithstanding, men will cling to such a law. As the Jews of old repelled the teaching of Jesus, so Christians, through every age since, have been repelling His teaching. They cling to a "law contained in ordinances." They attach undue value to some supposed efficacy in the performance of the two simple rites. They must be performed after some imagined fashion. The mode is everything; the hands to administer everything; the condition of assistants and of recipient everything. This state of things has relation to what are called Reformed Churches; but what shall be said of the many false sacraments established by Popery. In these is gross error, "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men." But even among reformed Churches, Christians now, as did the Jews, ascribe all virtue to a rite, and cling with tenacity to a ceremonial religion. They think God's mercies obtained through a ceremonial worship. They believe in an appointed channel through only which God's grace flows. They do not rise to the Gospel teaching that what God seeks are men's hearts; that a genuine love to Him may

produce its legitimate fruit—love to all around. This is the end contemplated by the Gospel, and which constitutes the teaching of the Lord's personal ministry on earth. Ceremonials are but helps to bring this about. Few, comparatively, have discovered this, and have thrown away the trammels of ceremonial worship.

God "abolished the law contained in ordinances," that is, the ritual law; the moral law He hath not abolished. Though we live under the law of grace, "being justified *freely* by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," yet is not the moral law thereby abolished. By faith in the law of grace we do not make void the moral law; "God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii). The moral law which the decalogue sustains is founded in the harmony and fitness of things. Our very inner being is framed after the moral law. To offend against it is therefore to wound ourselves.

Assent to some of these remarks will be given by many well-informed, and all rightly constituted minds; but even among advanced men there is the lingering look behind after a levitical past. Men so cling to sensible and material ordinances, that a desire for them, and a faith in them, keep them spell-bound. It is all but a universal opinion, that without water baptism there is no salvation. From a law of "grace" they fall back into "a law contained in ordinances." The *free* justification is supplanted by a conditional justification. The Gospel has not been understood. This is a bold declaration, and will meet with contempt. Truth has ever fared badly, and if the Master, when he proclaimed it, was reviled, surely it is no hard matter that a humble servant should get a share of the treatment which the world's wisdom gives. It is true, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, God's people doth not consider." If the Gospel have been understood, how is it that Christendom presents one mass of filthy corruption? Its notorious condition is bewailed on every hand. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it,

but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." And yet the Gospel was given to cleanse, but hitherto without effect. The universal dependance in a supposed "law contained in ordinances" has kept the second Israel as semi-barbarians. In name they are Christians, but they "have gone away backward," and in principles and conduct the great mass are heathens. Little as they think it, some millions of nominal Christians are heathens in an idolatrous faith. Only a "very small remnant" are otherwise, or we should have been as Sodom and Gomorrah (Is. i. 9). Only the few are within "the temple; the great mass are in the outer court given unto the Gentiles" (Rev. xi. 2). Of the false principles which have given rise to this state of things, those which concern "the doctrine of baptisms" have been fruitful in evil. The doctrine of baptisms, we do not hesitate to affirm, has not been understood. All Christendom has been at fault about it. One false fundamental principle has obtained among all Churches, namely, that "baptism doth save;" meaning thereby, water baptism doth save. It is founded on an opinion that Christ died for the baptised, whereas the Scriptures unequivocally assert that Christ died for all men. This fundamental false principle from the base passes upward in the super-structure, and pervades every part of the ecclesiastical edifice: the Church of man. Thus it is, the base being false, we have presented to our gaze a false super-structure of many incongruous materials. So it is that some are drawn to admire a patch here, others a patch there; and each coterie sets up its own particular faith. So it is that some attach importance to one form of water baptism, others to other modes. Some are so bigoted to their notions, that they exclude from Christianity all not baptised after a mode established among them.

The fact is patent, that great diversity of opinion prevails about baptism. The opinions which give rise to varied practices cannot all have their foundation in truth. It is not, therefore,

too much to assert, that the subject of baptism has not been understood. Indeed, from the first dawn of Christianity to a now approaching noon day, water baptism has given rise to many disputes. They began in the Apostles' time, converts contending about the effect as administered by one or other of the disciples. (1 Cor. i). They continue to our times.

The various opinions which have prevailed, and which, in a measure, still prevail, may be summed up in the following:

Water baptism washeth away all past sin.

It washeth away original sin.

It may be administered only by authorised clerical hands.

It may be administered by other hands.

It may be administered only to believers.

It may be administered only to adults capable of belief.

It may be administered to infants, sureties answering for their belief.

It may be administered to infants, without expressed belief on their behalf by sureties.

It may be administered by effusion or sprinkling.

It may be administered only by immersion.

It gives conditionally a new birth.

It gives actually a new birth.

To enter upon all the arguments by which the several advocates of these varied opinions attempt to sustain them is not at all needful. The opinions are so diverse and opposite, that this fact is proclaimed, that water baptism cannot have been placed in that clear and intelligible light which commands universal assent.

The present confused and mingled mass of entangled diverse opinions can only be separated and arranged into order and clearness by enquiry into first principles. To take for granted existing dogmas, is to leave the subject where we find it—in chaos. To arrive at truth, we must establish first principles. We must not take for granted any dogma. Above all, we must

earnestly pray to the God of knowledge to open our understandings; to enlighten our dark minds; or we shall be as it was even with the man "greatly beloved," who "heard but understood not." If the time have arrived when knowledge is to be increased in spiritual, as it plainly has in natural physical matters, we shall not pray in vain.

To understand aright any one doctrine or rite, it is needful, unless a knowledge thereof be specially revealed, to embrace with an understanding mind the whole Gospel scheme. The whole must be grasped, or the probability is we shall err on an individual doctrine.

As the present dispensation is one of grace, and not of law, so are there no commands for the mode of ritual observances. Under the law, the rites are laid down authoritatively, beginning with words such as these, "The Lord said," "and the Lord commanded," giving minute particulars, leaving no room for false interpretation. Under the dispensation of grace this is not so. There are no commands for the mode, nor even explicitly are any principles given to govern the mode of ritual observances. There are principles, but they have to be sought out; they are not on the surface.

The absence of defined intelligible rules does not arise from neglect, or even from indifference, but from design. The Gospel Scriptures are suited to every age. There is within the whole teaching of our Lord hidden meanings, and hidden wisdom, and these unfold themselves successively as greater light is vouchsafed. Thus the Scriptures are fitted for every age. They are adapted to a dark and gloomy, as they are to a highly enlightened age. They meet the wants of the uninstructed, as they will meet the wants of a future lettered people. With feeble light a course is pursued the Scriptures do not warrant; and when increased light is given, it is perceived the course pursued is unscriptural. And yet it may be the past course has been suited to the past condition. As before observed, the Gospel contemplates

a highly instructed condition of man, and until this has been reached, the Gospel scheme will not be acted out in full integrity. From an ignorant to a highly instructed condition are intermediate stages that have to be filled in. Permissively they are filled in by the course of events. Christianity has thus taken on forms not harmonizing with the great Gospel truths. And yet no doubt these were suited to successive epochs. With feeble light allowed it is not permitted to see the want of harmony. When increased light is given it is perceived that past practices are condemned, and they are successively laid aside. Though Popery is so highly condemned, as exhibiting again the incense offered "on every high hill," as aforetime did the elder Israel (1 Kings xiv); yet we are not to conclude that it has not a single redeeming feature, that it has not subserved a purpose. The change out of Pagan idolatry into Christian light comprehends a vast region. The wilderness has to be traversed out of Egypt into the land of Canaan. The ecclesiastical past was suited to the political and social past, and probably fewer evils resulted than from another form of religious worship. No doubt, when we reach a height from whence the whole past may be surveyed, the several successive stages will appear in harmonious arrangement.

To arrive at a just knowledge of the subject of baptisms, we must not depend upon the writings of successive learned and pious men who have given to the world their opinions. It may be well enough to investigate them, but not to receive them as authorities. Their opinions have received a complexion from the prevailing sentiments of the period in which they wrote. We must ascend to the higher source from whence all knowledge upon the subject springs. We must go to God's Book—the Book which in every part bears the impress of God's seal, the testimony of His handiwork.

What, then, is the prevailing characteristic of this Book as affecting rites? It may be summed up in the words of Paul,

"Therefore *leaving the principles* of the doctrine of Christ, *let us go on unto perfection,* not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of *the doctrine of baptisms,* and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Heb. vi). These words teach that that for which Christ condemned the Sadducees, men in every age are condemned, namely, attaching undue importance to principles, and forgetting the end sought—"perfection." Now perfection consists not in an outward act, but in an inward grace. St. Paul therefore goes on to argue that having been enlightened to a knowledge "of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come," that if any fall away they cannot by an outward act "renew them again unto repentance." He teaches that outward acts are not only inefficacious, but if reliance be placed on them that they are sinful, for by such is the Lord "crucified afresh and put to an open shame." Will worship supplants Christ worship, and a principle which crucified aforetime, crucifies afresh. St. Paul goes on to show what is the object of the principles. It is to bring man to a knowledge of what God requires; and what God requires is that men should "bring forth herbs meet for use," and that they should exhibit in their conduct "things that accompany salvation." The end is, that a genuine love to God should bear its natural fruit, "peace and good will to men." It is that we should "cease to do evil, and learn to do well."

It may be urged that the man who condemns a dependance on "principles" is himself a depender on principles. He is desirous of pulling out "the mote out of his brother's eye," and sees not "the beam that is in his own eye." May we hope in our case it is not so. A discussion of principles is not a dependance upon them.

It will be observed "the principles" involve "the doctrine of baptisms." Not of baptism, but of baptisms. As the antithesis

to the "one baptism," it will be well to bear it in mind. It hints at more than "one baptism."

The principles are likened by St. Paul to "the rain that cometh oft upon the earth." They are means to an end, and a great mistake is made when they are placed for the end. The principles, like rain, refresh and invigorate, but they do not bear fruit. The principles receive no commendation, but the men who exhibit good will to others, as the result of union with Christ receive "blessing from God."

In no part of the New Testament can it be found that saving importance is attached to a rite. But all stress is laid upon purity, and peace, and good will to others, and honest intention, the fruits of communion with Christ. Throughout does this teaching prevail. Christ instructs the propriety of observing a rite commanded, but He inculcates in every page the necessity of an elevated spiritual morality. The teaching of the New Testament is in accordance with that in the 58th of Isaiah, wherein puritanical observances are condemned, and true righteousness upheld.

A puritanical observance of the ceremonial law was condemned by Christ (Matt. xxiii. 23-35). He could not, therefore, desire a reliance upon a pharisaical observance of a simple rite. He did not attach an importance to an outward act as of itself giving virtue. He could not mean, therefore, to impose a rite, an incomplete observance of which should lead to eternal condemnation. The absence of clear, defined, intelligible commands about the two Christian rites is proof of this. A doubt would not be left to hang over a rite intended to have a saving efficacy. The whole economy of the Gospel is opposed to the unmerciful doctrine that "baptism doth save," meaning thereby that water baptism doth save, and that all unbaptized persons are condemned, or perish.

In unison with the popular belief that water baptism is necessary to salvation, is the current opinion that "baptism doth

signify and seal our engrafting *into* Christ." This is an error common to all Christians. Even those who argue against regeneration by water baptism hold this false doctrine, contrary to every sound principle. For if water baptism baptizes *into* Christ, then is regeneration, or new life, a consequence. But water baptism does not baptise into Christ, as we shall presently show.

The Gospel teaches that union with Christ gives life eternal; that is, immediate, ever present life. But it does not teach that union has its beginning at, or by, water baptism. Union with Christ, or incorporation into Christ, is not by water baptism. Water baptism is not an appointed means for that purpose. Water baptism is not an agent to effect it. Union with Christ, or incorporation into the mystical body of Christ, is by "adoption." It is by the immediate influence of the Spirit. The doctrine of incorporation by spiritual influence will be enforced hereafter.

The absence of water baptism does not exclude from participation in this gracious act of the love of God. Paul's declaration is that "neither height nor depth, nor *any other creature,*" meaning thereby, that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It may be urged that Paul is here meaning those who are baptised by water "in the name of the Lord Jesus." Paul is meaning no such thing, as a careful perusal of the 8th chapter to the Romans will discover. Paul is meaning that those "whom God did foreknow He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son," and that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come;" indeed, nothing "shall be able to separate them from the love of God." Neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, can shut out from the love of God. If it were possible to make baptism a thing of no time, then were it possible that its non-observance may separate from the love of God.

But neither "death nor life" shall separate from the love of

God. Scriptural death and life are the two states of union, or non-union with God. Mortal death, as we intend in a future paper to show, enters not into the Scripture scheme. Death, therefore, in this passage, does not mean death of the mortal body, but spiritual death, or non-union with God. And Paul is meaning that a state of spiritual death shall not separate the elect from the love of God. Now, there are three classes of persons in a state of spiritual death—nominal Christians, bearing the name only, and not incorporated into Christ; the Hebrews, rejecting Christ; and Pagans, who know not Christ. But of these three classes not one is shut out, as a class, from the love of God. But God, with whom He so wills, shall speak home to their hearts, and conform their beings to the image of His dear Son. They shall partake of His likeness. Nothing shall separate them from the love of God. The non-observance of an appointed rite shall not separate.

Let us not be misunderstood. A plain command cannot with impunity be rashly disobeyed, but circumstances may justify its non-fulfilment. As it regards water baptism, its observance does not create a claim, its non-observance does not, on account of a supposed virtue in the rite, set aside the free gift of God's love. The gift is irrespective of it. Every man, not already enrolled a member of Christ's nominal, or what is usually called visible kingdom, and intelligence reach him of the Gospel, will hasten to conform to the will of Christ and be baptised in His name. The outward act of a conforming will will evidence to the inward change, and indicate the inner man. But if a knowledge of Christ does not reach a beloved one of God, or if circumstances intervene so that baptism cannot be had, its absence shall not separate from the love of God. A commanded ceremonial may, from circumstances, be put aside (Matt. xii. 3—7). The whole discourse recorded by Matthew is in depreciation of a ceremonial, and in advocacy of a righteous worship. In other places, also, similar teaching is recorded (Matt. vii).

In the 12th chapter we find two important declarations of our Lord, which bear upon the subject under consideration. One is, that "Whosoever shall do the will of His Father which is in heaven, the same is His brother, and sister, and mother;" the other, that "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."

Divines affirm that water baptism makes members of Christ's body; but our Lord says, that those who do the will of His Father are related to Him. These are they who are brothers, and sisters, and mothers. These are the "members of His body, bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh." These are "heirs and joint heirs with Christ." Now, it is very important to know what is the will of the Father, because this it is which constitutes union with Christ. What, then, is the will of the Father? Is it a pharisaical observance of a ceremonial commanded? Far from it. The very discourse from which the declarations are taken is condemnatory of attaching any virtue as inherent in a rite. What, then, is God's will? He has declared it, and left no room for doubt. It is that we "should clothe the naked, give food to the hungry, and let the oppressed go free" (Matt. xxv). It is not those who observe ceremonial acts of worship, and cry "Lord, Lord," who fulfil His will. Even those who prophesy in His name, if they work iniquity, "He will profess unto them *He never knew them*" (Matt. viii). Though water-baptised, and they profess communion, and prophesy or teach in God's name, yet, if they do not the will of the Father, He *never* knew them; consequently, they had no union with Him. Those who hear the sayings of Christ, and do them, do the will of the Father. Among these sayings is no mention of ritual observances. The sayings may be comprised in our Lord's words, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do to them: *for this is the law and the prophets*" (Matt. vii. 12). To be baptised is not to fulfil the will of the Father, and the law, and the

prophets; but to "do unto every one as we wish they should do unto us." If our Lord gave command for the administering a rite, the object was not to enforce it for the fulfilment of the law, or as an immediate means of salvation, but for other purpose. It was not commanded that men may therein do the will of the Father. To do the will of the Father, men must work righteousness, that "by their fruits they may be known." By these shall fellow men know if there be union with Christ, and not by a reception of water baptism, which is not intended to indicate it.

Water baptism "doth save," or that it is a means to salvation, and that unbaptised persons are not saved, is all but the universal opinion among Christians. It is very sad, people think, but so it is, unless we get our children baptised there is no salvation for them! And all the unfortunate heathen, it is very sad to think, they perish! But do unbaptised children, or unbaptised heathens, perish? Nay, they do not; and a knowledge that the Atonement is efficacious for all has reached the minds of some few intelligent Christians. But the great mass believe they do. They think that Christ died for the baptised, and not for the unbaptised; and thus they make the absence of baptism an unpardonable sin. But what saith our Lord. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." Even he "who speaks a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him." Opposition to Christ shall be forgiven. Only he who blasphemes the Spirit shall be unforgiven. Will it be contended that the unpardonable sin is the non-reception of the rite of water baptism? Yes, may answer some; "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." If the awful penalty of damnation results from the non-reception of water baptism, would these words afford the only colourable declaration thereof. But, it may be urged, this text does not stand alone; the words of Ananias to Paul warrant a similar conclusion, "Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins." Again, Peter says,

"Repent, and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." It will not be said that these texts point to the conclusion, that to blaspheme the Holy Ghost is the non-reception of baptism; but they declare, it may be said, that condemnation awaits those who have not their sins washed away by the appointed mystical rite of baptism. They are yet in their sins, and are, therefore, unforgiven. That baptism does not wash away sin we shall attempt to show. But if the unbaptised be still in their sins, yet is their state not hopeless. Christ says, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." Unless, therefore, being unbaptised is a sin against the Holy Ghost, supposing it to be a sin, it is not unpardonable.

The sin against the Holy Ghost plainly is not a non-reception of the rite of baptism. The sin against the Holy Ghost appears to me to be the rising up like Satan in direct hostility to God, and defying His power, after conviction of His superintending sovereignty. It is committed when the spirit of a man has been influenced by the Spirit of God to a knowledge of God, and a belief in the Spirit's influence, and then is led contumaciously and obstinately to resist the Holy influence, and to sin in direct hostility. "To sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth," is to do despite unto the Spirit of Grace, and to "provoke a fearful looking for of judgment," (Heb. x. 26-31). Some will incline to think this almost impossible; and well they may. It seems impossible that any man could be so daring as to rise up in open and avowed hostility to God, conscious that he is warring against the Omnipotent. The Scriptures assert the devils believe and tremble. A mental belief and a heart belief are very different things. A heart belief, which enshrines God in the heart, would never wilfully offend; but a mental belief, which sees God only in His power, and has no love in return for God's condescending love, hurried

on by infuriated passions, may rise up to dare the living God. To offend in this way appears to be the unpardonable sin. If this be so, then the non-reception of baptism is not the unpardonable sin.

Do we, therefore, argue that the rite, when it can be had, may be safely neglected? Certainly not. It is an institution for wise and gracious purposes, and, therefore, must be complied with, if possible. To be "born again of water" is a most important birth. But to be born "of water" is not to be born of "the Spirit." The confounding the two births is a foundation error among Christians.

Churchmen, men, I mean, whose faith comprehends an ecclesiastical body through whom only, it is conceived, sacramentally is conveyed the benefits of the Atonement, believe baptism to be an appointed rite by which mankind, by Adamite nature born in sin and dead unto God, are born anew in righteousness, and made alive in Christ. This is a fatal error, as we shall ultimately show. As a correlative in the creed of Christendom, the declaration in Scripture that "Christ died for all" is not received, it is frittered away, both in theory and practice, into Christ "died for the baptized."

Among churchmen are various shades of opinion. Some think that regeneration, or the new birth of the Spirit, invariably results in infant baptism. Others think that it sometimes accompanies the rite, and that a full efficacy is dependant upon concurrent faith on the part of administrator, recipient, sponsors, and parents. Those who think that regeneration is the invariable result, describe the rite as the appointed means whereby God is pleased to bestow new life; "That a spiritual gift is bestowed upon all infants through that act, whereby they are taken out of the line of Adam and grafted into the line of Christ." * The difference of opinion which prevails among churchmen upon the

* Wilberforce on Holy Baptism, p. 303.

subject of grace in baptism is well defined in a note in Archdeacon Wilberforce's book on Baptism, p. 304. It runs, "Mr. Gorham says, the unconditional efficacy of baptism, when rightly administered, was the point enforced by the Bishop; the unconditional efficacy of the sacrament, as dependant on due reception, was the doctrine defended by myself." These words of Mr. Gorham, presented by the Archdeacon to his readers, give a true statement of the difference in opinion of the two classes called high and low churchmen. They both think that a new spiritual life is conferred by the rite. The one, or high-churchman, that it is invariably conferred; the other, or low churchman, that it is conditionally conferred.

High churchmen admit the principle of conditional efficacy as applied to adult baptism. In this respect the two classes do not differ. In adults, the conditional state is received as expressed by the words, "without faith and repentance." If the state which these imply be the condition of the recipient, there can be no grace conferred, no spirit of life given.

It is about infant baptism that churchmen differ. As infants can offer no obstacle by actual sin, say high churchmen, so baptism invariably confers grace or new life of the Spirit. The seed of new life is sown, and it will depend on the future whether or not it fructify. The germ of new life has been given. Its effects may not be perceived; the new life may die; but it has been planted. The child has been born again of the Spirit, has been regenerate. Low churchmen say that a baptised child has not certainly received a new birth of the Spirit. It may have done so, but it has not without a suitable worthiness.*

Both classes of churchmen agree that the regeneration advo-

* "Now in the case of baptism, the conditions for the reception of its grace are faith and repentance, and the worthiness of the party, even in the case of infants (supposing them afterwards to reach a responsible age), depends upon the ultimate fulfilment of these conditions. I do not enter now into the discussion, whether the performance of those condi-

cated is not conversion. Regeneration with them means a new life sacramentally given in Christ by the Spirit, and conversion, an actual change of character. They have not discovered that regeneration and conversion are convertible terms. That so far as it is an influence wrought by the Spirit, regeneration and conversion mean the same thing.

Churchmen agree that "faith and repentance" are essential prior to baptism. Without these as the basis of operation, baptism has no efficacy. They, therefore, demand these of an unconscious infant. They do not look for them as evidenced realities, but they expect them as silent principles working in the child by the operation of the Spirit. Connecting with baptism the promise of our Lord, that he will be always present "where two or three are gathered together in His name," and the further promise, "Lo I am with you alway;" they expect, in answer to prayer, the influence of the Spirit upon the child. They have not perceived that the promise to be present is given for purposes with which baptism is not concerned. Viewing baptism as a rite to convey regeneration of the Spirit, and thus, as we shall show, confounding two separate and distinct baptisms, and mistaking the intention and object of water baptism, they get into many confused opinions. As Mr. Goode writes, p. 17, "Difficulties may be stated respecting it, and so *they may to every view of the subject* that can be taken. And no doubt there will be, to the end of time, a difference of opinion respecting it." The

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tions requires a sovereign and peculiar act of divine grace. That is another question. But what is maintained is, that there is a personal worthiness or suitability required in the infant, corresponding to that required in an adult, in order that baptism should seal to him the gift of regeneration. If faith and repentance are foreseen, the covenant made in baptism is valid and effectual in the eye of God. It may fairly be held, that the child is made a real member of the true Church of Christ, and more or less, therefore, a partaker of the Spirit."—*Goode's Effects of Infant Baptism*, p. 16.

italics are ours to point out the full admission of a learned and talented churchman. The declaration needs no comment. The full admission of difficulties justifies the assertion that baptism is not yet understood.

With the present reigning opinions no doubt difficulties exist, and will, while they are held, continue to exist. While baptism is received as a means whereby men "are engrafted *into Christ*," contrary to truth and Scripture, and the figment of man's imagination acted upon by demanding an embryo faith from an unconscious infant, no doubt difficulties will exist. The whole scheme which man has built of salvation and incorporation into Christ by water baptism is false, and, therefore, unscriptural; and while the scheme is maintained, difficulties will surround "the doctrine of baptisms." Nothing but confusion will reign while baptism is held to be a rite for communicating new life in Christ by baptising *into Christ;* thereby a spiritual act is diluted into a ceremonial act; thereby our "silver is become dross, our wine mixed with water" (Isa. i. 22). Herein lies the fundamental error of Christendom. Water baptism does not baptise *into* Christ, as we shall show.

Starting from this false principle many errors are run into. Water baptism is held to cleanse from sin; it is held to give new life by spiritual regeneration; faith is held as a prerequisite to a due reception of the rite. It is our purpose to show that the popular belief is false. Mistaking the character of the rite, and commingling it with operations of the spiritual kingdom, very erroneous opinions have obtained with regard to it, and a scheme in connection built up requiring a proxy belief altogether opposed to the Gospel.

WATER BAPTISM DOES NOT CLEANSE FROM SIN.

The popular belief is, that ritual baptism cleanses from original sin, and remits past committed sin. It is thought it is an appointed means whereby the Atonement is rendered efficacious. Bishop Pearson writes, "It is therefore sufficiently certain that

baptism, as it was instituted after the pre-administration of St. John, wheresoever it was received with all qualifications necessary in the person accepting, and conferred with all things necessary to be performed by the person administering, was most infallibly efficacious, as to this particular, that is, to the remission of all sins committed before the administration of this sacrament." The whole chapter on "Forgiveness of Sins," is argued upon the principle of sacramental or ritual agency, and concludes with, "God appointed in the Church of Christ the sacrament of baptism for the first remission, and repentance for constant forgiveness for all following trespasses."

The doctrine of remission of sins by water baptism is held, and has been held, by almost all divines. It enters into the ordinances and catechisms of the Churches. The Nicene Creed appears to uphold it: "I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins." This is an advance upon the Apostle's Creed, which asserts a belief in "the forgiveness of sins." The latter avows belief in a general forgiveness of sin, the former in a particular or conditional forgiveness.

The declarations in the New Testament seem to favour the doctrine of remission of sin by ritual baptism. When the people of Jerusalem asked of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38). And Ananias, when directed by the Spirit to meet Paul after his conversion, said, "Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins" (Acts xxii. 16). These declarations lead to the apparent conclusion that water baptism washes away sin.

The Apostles' Creed affirms a belief in the forgiveness of sins, without limitation, and this comprehensive declaration is sustained by the Gospel. The expressions used by Peter and Ananias do not contradict the doctrine of general or universal remission. The words of Peter are used in conformity with words uttered by our Lord, that "repentance and remission of sins should be

preached in His name" (Luke xxiv. 47). And what Paul asserts is, that remission is obtained through Christ; he does not mean to assert that sins are remitted through or by the rite of baptism; but he preached Christ, and urged the people to repentance, and to be baptised in the name of Christ. Nor does Ananias affirm that water baptism cleanses from sin; he exhorts Paul by an act of faith to take hold of the redemption in Christ. We are told, that through Christ's name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sin (Acts x. 43), and Ananias, in conformity with this truth, exhorts Paul by an act of faith to testify his belief, and to be baptized, "calling on the name of the Lord." Neither Peter or Ananias intend to assert that the rite of baptism, *per se*, remits sin. They could not mean to advance such a doctrine, as it is opposed to the Gospel, as we shall find. Faith in Christ remits sin, and faith is a result of the Spirit's influence, and Peter concludes his exhortation with these words, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even *as many as the Lord our God shall call.*"

The Gospel is, in fulfilment of the prediction in Daniel, "to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. ix. 24); the Gospel, therefore, declares that Christ died "for the sins of the whole world." He died "for all men," not alone for the baptised, but for all, "to make an end of sins."

It is true, that though Christ came to make an end of sins, that we have not on earth the full fruits of the Atonement. Many are yet in their sins, as experience too plainly proves, and the Scriptures declare. In this our time state, the atoning sacrifice is made efficacious only to few; but these few are not the ritually baptised; they are those only who are baptised by "the One Spirit into the one body," "without spot or blemish." The Atonement is intended to be efficacious to all, "to make an end of sins;" but on earth, the mass of mankind are supremely governed by a law pertaining to corporeal man; the few only are freed from it.

Man is under the influence of two laws: the law of sin, "in the members of the body;" and the law of God, influencing "the inner man." The law of sin pertains to the flesh; the law of God to the spirit (Rom. vii). The law of sin in the members produces a carnal mind, the law of God in the spirit produces the spiritual mind (Rom. viii). All men are subject to these two laws, and, as the one or the other prevails, so are men in a state of acceptance or non-acceptance with God. With a state of acceptance or of non-acceptance, ritual baptism has nothing to do.

Divines believe, that while on earth man's nature is incapable of being in a state of perfect acceptance with God; they think a sinless state here impossible. The Scriptures teach otherwise; they teach that through true union with Christ, "the law of God in the inner man" overcomes "the law of sin in the members of the body." The words of Paul, "O wretched man that I am" (Rom. vii. 24), seem to countenance the conclusion that the law of sin yet had dominion over him. But it is not so. Paul utters the exclamation as having relation to corporeal man, to which belongs the law of sin and death. That the exclamation had not reference to his then personal state is ascertained from what immediately follows: he demands, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and the answer is, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He thanks God he is delivered, so "that he himself," that is, his proper self, the inner man, serves "the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." He goes on exultingly to declare, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath *made me free* from the law of sin and death." Though with the flesh Paul served the law of sin, yet the law of God in the inner man so prevailed, that he, the inner man, his proper self, was freed from the law of sin.

Now this state was not the result of ritual baptism, nor is it ever the result of ritual baptism. It is the result of "the Spirit of

life in Christ," conveyed by "the Spirit of adoption," whereby we are enabled "to cry Abba, Father!" We are thus made, solely by God's grace, "children of God," and "heirs and joint heirs with Christ." The whole chapter from which these words are taken (Rom. viii.) is framed upon this principle, the doctrine of election. By the indwelling of God's Spirit the carnal mind is subdued to the spiritual mind; and it is most positively declared, that unless this change has taken place, so that men are led by the Spirit of God, they are yet in the flesh; they have the carnal mind at enmity with God; and that if any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. Ritual baptism has not made him a member of Christ, and freed him from the law of sin and death.

The spiritual mind is freed from the law of sin. The carnal mind is yet under the influence of the law of sin. If, therefore, the carnal mind continue after ritual baptism, it has not been freed by water from the law of sin. Indeed, water baptism was not instituted for such purpose. The mortal body is not quickened, that is, freed from the law of sin and death, by water baptism. It is quickened and freed from the law of sin, "by God's Spirit that dwelleth in it" (Rom. viii. 11). The adopted of God only on earth are cleansed from their sins. To them "there is no condemnation;" they are freed from the bondage of the law of sin. That ritual baptism does not give the Spirit of Christ, whereby we are made heirs with Christ, the Apostle writes, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ." There is an internal evidence of "life and peace," which a rite never yet conveyed.

But Christ died for all men, and all shall be freed from the law of sin and death. Not only the elect, but also the non-elect; not only the baptised, but the unbaptised also; not only the Jew, but also the Gentile; not only the "vessels to honour," but also "the vessels to dishonour." Christ will "make an end of sins;" He will have "all men to be saved."

Conformably with this teaching are the declarations in the

creeds, "the forgiveness of sins," and "one baptism for the remission of sins;" both are scripturally true.* The Apostles' creed proclaims the general forgiveness, the Nicene the particular or present forgiveness.

The general forgiveness is announced by Scripture in that it declares that Christ "died for all men," that the body of sin may be destroyed, and "death abolished." Christ died "to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." But the full purpose is not wrought out here. The law of sin in the members, that is the law of sin and death, is permitted to operate with many to the abeyance of the law of God in the inner man. To the end of this time state dispensation will man as man, be subject to the law of sin in the members. Only with God's chosen and elect people, in whom the Spirit dwells, is the law of sin and death overcome. All others are under the supreme influence of the law of sin in the members. But when the mortal body becomes a spiritual body, that is, here quickened by God's Spirit dwelling therein, this law ceases to operate. We do not wish now to follow out the course of argument suggested by this remark. It pertains to the subject of life and death, to which a future paper will be devoted.

The particular forgiveness, "one baptism for the remission of sins," declared in the Nicene Creed, whether so understood by its framers or not, refers to the elect, who have here their sins forgiven. By spiritual union with Christ they have passed from death unto life, from a state of condemnation they have passed to a state of justification. As St. Paul declares "to the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus," who, in times past, were as others, but now, by the grace of God, "even when dead in sins *hath* God *quickened* together with Christ" (Eph. ii). They have been made alive in Him, and are held to be sinless, and "they cannot sin because they are born of God" (1 John iii. 9). They

* Not that it is needful to assert the truth of the creeds. The creeds are not canon of Scripture. To receive them as canon of Scripture, is to add "to the things" of Scripture. (Rev. xxii. 18).

are those who have been baptised by the one Spirit into the one body. This body is thereby held to be pure, and declared to be without spot or blemish. The members have been admitted to the heavenly Jerusalem, where nothing entereth that defileth. Ritual baptism, which admits to the kingdom of mixed good and bad, cannot be the baptism meant. It is the baptism of the Spirit which makes truly a son of God; and if a son, then an heir, and joint-heir with Christ, and a true member of His immaculate body. True union with Christ has redeemed from the law of sin and death.

The false doctrine that ritual baptism washes away sin had an early beginning. By it, some towards the close of the third century deferred their baptism to the latest dying hour, hoping thereby that the whole body of their sins may be washed away. Having accepted the Gospel, and professed Christianity, they remained catechumens, and deferred baptism until a time when they expected they should sin no more. By the same false doctrine it is that infants, since infant baptism has been freely administered, are hastened to the baptismal-font, parents dreading lest their offspring should die before the Atonement could be made efficacious for them. Early Christians fostering this false doctrine instituted the anomalous practice of presenting a spurious, necessarily, because a proxy-faith.

Herein is a past fundamental error. Hereby the Atonement has been depreciated. The Scripture declaration that "Christ died for all men," has been read to mean that Christ died for the baptised. Christianity, following as it did, upon a levitical, ceremonial-religion, has not been understood. A religion wholly of grace was too etherial, and too spiritual to be at once received in its pure form. The ritual baptism, as a consequence, became inseparably united in men's minds as a necessary precedent to an atoning efficacy. The "doctrine of baptisms," being at the same time not understood, some expressions connected therewith lent a further aid to misconception.

To understand aright "the doctrine of baptisms," it is needful that we have a clear comprehension of the whole Gospel scheme. We must know, not only what more immediately relates to baptism, but we must be conversant with all the great Gospel truths. Without this we shall be sure to misconceive the meaning of many portions of Scripture.

Some of the expressions, isolated, lead to the belief that water baptism cleanses from sin, or has a saving efficacy. Of such is the declaration of Peter, "Even baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter iii. 21). This expression, so decisive, seems conclusive. And yet it does not mean that ritual baptism saves, or cleanses from sin, or has a saving efficacy from the consequences of sin. It exhibits baptism as a sign or symbol, as a means for the exhibition of faith, and as a means of warning to mankind, "just as was the ark while preparing, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." Baptism, as a sensible sign, is intended to draw men to Christ, just as the ark was, while preparing, to God; and as few, that is, only eight, persons were then saved by water, so here only a remnant are under saving grace by true baptism, of which water is the symbol, or, as Paul writes, "the like figure." And to explain that Peter uses the word baptism in a double sense—that is, in one as a figure, and in another as a reality; water baptism being the figure, and spirit or true baptism being the reality—he adds (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God). The baptism which saves is the baptism of "an answer of a good conscience towards God;" not a baptism of immersion by water which cleanses the flesh, but a baptism of God, who by His grace gives the assurance that we are the children of God, from which is derived "the answer of a good conscience towards God."

The opinion that "baptism doth save" gathers strength from the declaration of our Lord, that "Except a man be born *of water*, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of

God" (John iii. 5). And from the language of Paul also, who, writing of the love Christ hath for the Church, uses these words, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing *of water* by the Word" (Eph. v. 26).

These two portions of Scripture lead to the inference that water cleanses from sin, or has a saving efficacy. But are they really intended to declare it? No; we do not hesitate to affirm that they are not. There is in both allusion to something greater than water. It cannot fail to be perceived that much, if not the greater part of Scripture language, is couched in mysterious language, using terms with concealed meanings. Not that the meanings are wholly concealed, but they are concealed from the natural eye. Christ ever spake in parables and figures of speech, that seeing, all men should not see, and hearing, all men should not hear. Though conveyed in dark speech, yet is the whole within the limits of the Gospel or Scripture scheme; and the meanings are to be gathered by a knowledge of the scheme.

The declaration of our Lord we do not at present seek to explain. We think the explanation will come better hereafter. It appears to affirm that without water baptism no man can be saved, or, in the words of our Lord, "enter into the kingdom of heaven." And the inference is, that water baptism is needful to cleanse from sin, to fit us to enter heaven. This, however, is not the meaning of our Lord's words. The Gospel is opposed to such an interpretation of them.

With regard to the words of Paul, it will be observed, "the washing of water by the Word" involve an apparent contradiction, and hint at a mystery. The first impression is that the Church is cleansed by the water through the Word as the effect of appointment. But this is not the meaning of the passage. The Church is cleansed, not by ritual water, but by the Word. The washing of water herein mentioned is not ritual water. The whole Gospel proclaims that Christ's Church is cleansed by His own immediate act of sovereign grace, and that not through

a ritual, but by direct communion of His Spirit. "By grace are men saved through faith, and that not of themselves: it is the gift of God." Faith, the gift of God, saves here, as it will save hereafter, when every eye shall see Him. Faith unites here to Christ by the Word, and all thus united are cleansed with the washing of water by the Word. The Scriptures declare to us a pure river of the waters of life. It is in this river that men are washed and cleansed by the Word. Paul is writing of the sanctified Church, without spot or blemish, of which the new Jerusalem is the figure, or symbol. He could not be meaning Christ's Church was cleansed by ritual water, because experience proves that it has not the power to produce a spotless Church. The "glorious Church" which God "presents to Himself," is a Church cleansed by other than a ceremonial washing. The glorious Church is cleansed by the washing of a purer water than that administered by men's hands. The cleansing is in the water of life, flowing out from the throne of God, and of the Lamb (Rev. xxii. 1). The Church without spot or blemish is washed by "pure water" (Heb. x. 22). It is by the water of life, or, in the words of Paul, "of water by the Word," that the new covenant is perfected. Or, dropping the figure, it is by God's immediate influence the Church is cleansed and perfected.

There are no passages which affirm that water baptism cleanses from sin. There are the few to which reference has been made which seem to imply it (Acts xi. 38). Not water, but blood, cleanses from sin. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." It is "the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, that purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." The blood of Christ purges the conscience, not water baptism. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Our Lord Himself declared, in vision to John, at Patmos,—"He washed us from our sins in His own blood." These Scripture declarations are positive, and

are strongly opposed to the negative inferences only in favour of remission of sin by water baptism.

The declaration that blood alone cleanses from sin, divines readily accept; but then, say they, our Lord appointed certain rites as channels of grace. Protestant churchmen affirm that Christ appointed two Sacraments to be administered by authorized hands, through which a changed nature is communicated and sustained; and that the old nature in Adam cannot be buried, and the new nature in Christ built up, except through the appointed channels.

No doubt water baptism and the Eucharist are appointed mediums of visible communion with Christ in His outer kingdom; and they do become, by faith, sensible expressions of true union in the inner kingdom. The two Sacraments are symbols of realities, and they become expressions of the realities in proportion as faith accompanies their reception; but a great mistake is made when they are presented as the realities.

Though advocated by divines as channels of grace, yet it is perceived that Christ exerts an influence outside the limits of the sacramental system. Archdeacon Wilberforce writes, "The actings of the Eternal Word are as wide as the spirits which He has created. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And this is the secret of that gracious influence by which those who are strangers to the Church" (that is, the Ecclesiastical Church,) "are not wholly unvisited; this seed sprung up in the heart of many a Gentile; it is present even now in those in whom invincible ignorance detains without the Church's pale, who yearn after her blessings, but do not possess them. Such men show the work of the Law written in their hearts."*

To pass over *the invincible ignorance* of those "who are detained" outside the Clergy Church, we express our complete concurrence in the otherwise truly Christian and comprehensive sentiment the clause embodies. The actings of the Eternal

* The Doctrine of Holy Baptism. Wilberforce, p. 133.

Word are not limited within the narrow limits of a formulary; the Archdeacon's acute mind has embraced this truth as a natural truth, he has not perceived that the Scriptures declare it.

Side by side with this Christian sentiment we will place that of a nonconformist divine, which has some affinity. "There is a covenant in which they" (infants) "are included, and which will save as many of them as are included in it—the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son, in which He engaged to lay down His life as a ransom for His chosen, whether infants or adults. Though infants are not saved by faith, they can join in 'the song of the Lamb' in heaven, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.'" *

Both these writers have a glimpse of the truth, but both have obscured visions: the one, or High Churchman, by faith in the sacramental system; the other, or Anabaptist, by a one-sided view of the Gospel. They both misapprehend the Gospel. One teaches that regeneration is a result of water baptism; the other, that Christ died as a ransom *for His chosen*. The Gospel is opposed to both. Both limit the efficacy of the Atonement. Christ died as a ransom not only for baptised, or for His chosen, but He died "as a ransom for all." High Churchmen and Anabaptists, however, do not alone furnish divines who teach falsely; every sect with which I am acquainted furnish them; some approach nearer the truth than others, but all, as it appears to me, encourage some error.

Though sins are remitted here by the one baptism of the Spirit, which, as we shall show presently, only baptises *into* Christ, and which alone cleanses immediately, so that the spiritually baptised sin not, and there is therefore no condemnation to them, yet sins are remitted ultimately to all the human race by the atoning blood of Christ. The Gospel is, Christ "will have all men to be saved;" "to make an end of sin;" to "destroy the works of the devil;"

* Carson on Baptism, p. 216.

and even "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Christ "gave Himself a ransom for all," to "put off the whole body of sin."

The efficacy of the Atonement is limited by the ecclesiastical sacramental system. In no part of the New Testament can it be discovered that the Atonement is circumscribed and limited to the narrow circle of such system. Christ's blood is nowhere declared to be shed for a few, but repeatedly declared to be shed for all. It was shed for all, that all may be ultimately cleansed. All have an interest in the Atonement. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; *even so*, by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon *all men* unto justification of life." Just as universally all were condemned, so universally all are justified. It is contended that a denial of ritual baptismal regeneration is incompatible with a belief in the doctrine of our Lord's mediation.* Just is the reverse of this. A belief in the doctrine of our Lord's mediation in all its fulness, overturns the theory of ritual regeneration: Christ died for all men, is the Scripture declaration; Christ died for the baptised, is the sacramental declaration.

Christ died for all men, no doubt, say Churchmen; but this means that He died for all who will come unto Him through faith, and be cleansed from their sins in the laver of purification, the appointed rite of baptism. "Baptism is the appointed means wherein the second Adam communicates His renewed nature to His brethren." This is the sacramental, but not a Gospel, doctrine. Ritual baptism is not the appointed means whereby men have a renewed nature in Christ. This we shall enforce presently. The renewed nature is the converted nature into the image of God's dear Son; this nature is alone cleansed here, and ritual baptism is not concerned with this cleansing. All shall be cleansed hereafter. The sacramental doctrine cleanses only the ritually baptised.

* Wilberforce on Holy Baptism, p. 125.

The doctrine of universal redemption is enforced in many parts of Scripture. True, there are many apparently contradictory passages; with these we will not now deal. Our object at present is to show that Christ died for the sins of all, that all may be ultimately cleansed; and if this be so, then it follows that ritual baptism was not appointed to cleanse from original or past committed sins. We have shown that an especial baptism of the Spirit is needed to cleanse our nature here, and that all not thus baptised are under the influence of the law of sin; ritual baptism has not removed it. If the sins of all are ultimately cleansed, whether ritually baptised or not, it follows that ritual baptism was not instituted for the purpose of washing away sin; for if some only have their sins remitted here, and that without reference to water baptism, and all have them remitted hereafter, ritual baptism has nothing to do in the matter.

Of some of the passages in Scripture, which teach universal redemption in Christ, are the following:—

St. Paul to the Ephesians begins his epistle by the particular, or elected redemption; "Those chosen before the foundation of the world, who should be holy and without blame before God in love," who "have redemption through Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of sins;" but revealed farther is the mystery of God's will, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God might gather together in one *all things* in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." All things are to be gathered together in Christ in the dispensation *of the fulness of times.* The Gentiles, we learn in the third chapter, are "fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel." This is "the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God." Universal redemption in Christ in the fulness of time, particular redemption, "the predestinated according to God's purpose, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that they should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ." Herein have we

the declarations of present and future redemption. We do not wish now to enlarge upon the subject, we will only enforce the doctrine of universal redemption by quoting some passages of Scripture.

We have seen the prediction of Daniel, with reference to the coming of the Messiah "to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." In conformity with this, John the Baptist prophetically declares, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away *the sin of the world*" (John i. 29).

Our Lord says,—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men* unto me" (John xii. 32).

Again, our Lord declares,—"God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that *the world* through Him might be saved" (John iii. 17).

Conformably with these declarations, Paul writes—"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have *all men* to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself *a ransom for all*, to be *testified* in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 3—6).

To the Romans Paul writes,—"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift* came upon *all men* unto justification of life" (Rom. v. 18).

To the Hebrews Paul writes,—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for *every man*" (Heb. ii. 9).

To the Corinthians,—"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if *one died for all*, then were all dead: and that *He died for all*, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15).

To Timothy,—"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of *all men,* specially of those that believe" (1 Tim. iv. 10).

These many declarations are most explicit, and overthrow the doctrine of partial salvation, or the salvation of the baptised believers. They are very conclusive, and suffice to show that Christ died for all to be a ransom for all, and to be the Saviour of all men. Not as most Christians think, the Saviour of the baptised faithful, or as others think, "the chosen" baptised or not. He is the Saviour of even the most guilty sinners; blessed be God! He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, ultimately to put away sin. "Not for ours only," as St. John writes, that is, for the then baptised believers, but for the sins of all mankind. He is the Saviour of all men; not only of the good, or those made so by God's grace, the present justified, but also of the wicked; not alone of the obedient, but also of the disobedient; not alone of the baptised, but also of the unbaptised. God is "no respecter of persons," and all are "concluded under sin." Some have their sins remitted while yet in the flesh, others will have their sins remitted when the spirit returns to God who gave it. Christ is the Saviour of all men to put an end to sin. This teaching divines will stumble at. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." They will seek, as they have sought, to limit the efficacy of the Atonement. Let us again remind all such of the comprehensive language of Paul, that just as universal is the condemnation, so universal is the justification. It is given as a *free gift* unto all.

Now, the justification which the elect are assured of here is independent of ritual baptism. The Scriptures teach, "that uncircumcision which *is by nature,* if it fulfil the law (that is, the moral law), shall judge those who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law. For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision

is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, *but of God*" (Rom. ii). The virtuous heathen is better than the vicious Israelite, and will have a higher place assigned him (Matt. xii. 41, 42). It may be urged that this passage does not refer to baptism and Christians. The reply is, that the language is figurative, as almost all Scripture language is, and this is here determined by the expression, "he is a Jew." Now, literally, without Hebrew parentage and without circumcision, no man is a Jew; but the passage declares that he is a Jew who is circumcised in heart. Consequently, it is seen that circumcision and Jew are figurative expressions, to intimate the difference between a ritually allied and a truly allied. The passage is in perfect keeping with the eighth chapter to the Romans, wherein it is declared, that "things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." Water baptism confers no saving grace. It confers privileges, as did circumcision of old. It brings into communion with the Word; but it does not save; it does not wash away sin. Ritual baptism and purification have no relation to each other as cause and effect. Those who yet think that it has, let them set about proving it. Let them disprove or nullify, if they can, the assertions contained in the texts presented, and show by opposite testimony, if they can, that redemption is limited to the ritually baptised justified.

"A real belief in original sin, implies of necessity a belief in baptismal purification"—so writes a high churchman.* This assertion we beg leave to deny. We firmly believe in original sin as pertaining to the nature of the first Adam, and yet deny that ritual baptism cleanses from it. Our assertion is, that the nature of the second Adam only is capable of purifying the nature of the first Adam. Incorporation into the second Adam cleanses from the impurities of the nature derived from the first Adam. But incorporation into the second Adam is not by water,

* Wilberforce, page 121.

but by the Spirit, as we shall show. Union with Christ, or, which is the same thing, with God, only cleanses from sin, whether on earth or in heaven. Nor is there any distinction between original or contracted sins. Union with Christ cleanses from all sin.

Ritual baptism does not cleanse; has no saving efficacy. It is not a circumcision made with hands, but "a circumcision made without hands," that puts off "the body of the sins of the flesh" by the circumcision of Christ. It is by circumcision of Christ, or by the absence in Christ of the sin in the members, that the body of the sins of the flesh is put off. Union with Christ communicates of His nature, so that all united are "buried with Him in baptism, wherein also they are risen with Him, through the faith of *the operation of God*, who hath raised Him from the dead." In this passage baptism is used symbolically, as it is in many other parts of the New Testament; it refers to the baptism of the Spirit, or, as the preceding language states, "a circumcision made without hands." That the language is wholly symbolical, the expression, "circumcision made without hands," proves. A literal circumcision without hands, or without physical agency, is a contradiction in terms, and can only be explained as symbolical language to convey an "operation of God," or a work wrought by the Spirit.* And what St. Paul is meaning, in the passage before us, is not that ritual baptism has put off sin, but, that they, that is "the faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse," being before dead in sins and uncircumcision of the flesh, or under the influence of the law of sin in the members, were, by "a circumcision made without hands," "quickened together with Christ, having forgiven them all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against them, which was contrary to them, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" (Col. ii.

* Dr. Magee, in his work on the Atonement, rightly observes, that the writers of the New Testament naturally employed the Old Testament language, as being familiar, and as supplying figures of speech.

11—15). That the baptism mentioned is not a ritual baptism, is manifest not only from the expression, "circumcision made without hands," but from the whole epistle, which is directed against "ordinances," and "philosophy and vain deceits, after the tradition of men," and with the assurance that "the new man is renewed *in knowledge*" (not in baptism) "after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." The new man, after the image of Christ, is renewed in knowledge, and all thus renewed are "the elect of God, holy and beloved," without distinction of Jew or Gentile. God speaks home to His chosen on earth, and they are renewed in knowledge after the image of God in the flesh, the pattern humanity. Ritual baptism, though conducive as a means to an end in furthering the extension of knowledge, yet, is not the means whereby a renewal of man's nature in the image of God is produced; it is produced solely and entirely as an effect direct from God. All thus renewed are buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also they are risen with Him. They partake of His nature, and put off the sins of the flesh, and mortify their members which are upon the earth. They are dead to the strong allurements of "the law of sin in the members," and are made alive in Christ by "the law of God in the inner man."

Now, though the Gentiles, or Pagans, are under the influence of Christ's mediatorial government, yet, as compared to Christ's immediate kingdom on earth, it is in a limited sense. All mankind are ransomed from their sins, and the full benefit of this all will experience, but few among the Pagans receive immediate benefit. Men are renewed in *knowledge*, and unless this be conveyed to them they cannot ordinarily be enlightened. Nevertheless, God does not cast them away from His love, and some are renewed, by the direct influence of God, to a knowledge of His righteous laws; they are made to partake of the humanity in

God. But these are few; the mass are "alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them." Notwithstanding, they are not cast away from God; Christ is their peace as well as our peace, who are Christians. "The middle wall of partition" has been cast down between Jew and Gentile, so that of "twain God hath made *one* new man." "Both have access by One Spirit unto the Father." Pagans are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." All have an inheritance, but all are not taught to apply for it. Ritual baptism is a means whereby they may be gathered in, and may have made known to them their title to a share in the unsearchable riches of Christ.

All have a title to the inheritance; but all do not partake of it here. Those only who are influenced by the Spirit of God have here peace with God. He "who is above all must be through all and in all" who here partake of the riches of His kingdom. These only have fellowship with God, and partake of the humanity in God.

The mistake of Christendom has been the limiting the efficacy of the Atonement. Christ died for the baptised is the ecclesiastical theory; Christ died for all is the Gospel truth. Erring in this fundamental doctrine, an influence has been ascribed to ritual baptism to which it is not entitled. It is said to wash away sins, whereas sins are cleansed only by union with Christ or God. Spirit baptism alone remits sin here, as Spirit baptism will only remit hereafter. By Spirit baptism is meant true communion with God.

We refrain now from enlarging upon the doctrine conveyed in the Apostles' Creed,—"the forgiveness of sins," or universal redemption. The general forgiveness involves the consideration of original sin, the subjects of life and death, of punishment, of election, and of spiritual grades. We have said enough to show that the Atonement is for the sins of the whole world, and that all will ultimately participate therein, whether ritually baptized or

not, and that some have here a present interest who are spiritually baptised. Sin will be cleansed from all hereafter, and is cleansed from some on earth. These benefits flow from God's gracious love to man, and are bestowed without reference to a commanded rite. The rite of baptism was not instituted as an act done to cleanse from sin.

Another great mistake among Christians is in supposing that ritual baptism baptises *into* Christ. It does no such thing; if it did, then would it wash away sin. But it does not baptise *into* Christ, as we shall proceed to show.

WATER BAPTISM DOES NOT GIVE THE NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST, THAT IS, IT DOES NOT BAPTISE *into* CHRIST.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." This declaration of our Lord appears to support the doctrine of ritual spiritual regeneration. This, together with other Scripture statements, lead to the inference that water baptism is essential to union with Christ, and, consequently, needful to give the renewed nature in Christ. Hence is the assertion that "baptism" (meaning ritual baptism) "is the appointed means wherein the second Adam communicates His renewed nature to His brethren." In opposition to this, we assert that ritual baptism does not convey a regenerated nature.

It is asserted by divines that water baptism baptises into Christ. Not only high and low Churchmen, but Anabaptists, and others, believe that ritual baptism incorporates with Christ. Holding this as a fundamental principle, high Churchmen consistently assert that water baptism communicates a renewed nature in Christ. The opinion, so all but universally held, that the rite baptises *into* Christ, is the opinion we oppose. If it be shown that water baptism does not baptise into Christ, and is not intended as an immediate agent to incorporate with Him, then the whole theory of spiritual regeneration by water baptism falls to the ground.

If water baptism does not baptise *into* Christ, then by it there can be no new nature given. Only by incorporation with Christ can the nature derived from the first Adam be renewed after the image of the second Adam.

While we contend that the new birth by incorporation with Christ is not given by water baptism, we do not contend that no new birth by water has been given. In a sense a new birth has been given: "Ye must be born of water," is our Lord's declaration, and this has a meaning. There is, then, a new birth of water; but this is not the new birth contended for by divines, and which we oppose. Of the new birth of water we will give our opinion by-and-by. The new birth which we oppose is a new birth asserted to be given *by the Spirit*, in and through the act of water baptism, as a result of being, as is supposed, sacramentally baptised *into* Christ. We assert that the baptism of water and the baptism of the Spirit are two distinct and separate baptisms; and that without the second baptism there is as yet no renewed nature in Christ.

Let us understand what is the Scripture definition of the new birth in Christ. A right apprehension of this will help to elucidate the subject. St. Paul writes, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii). The Spirit of life in Christ is defined as a law which frees from the law of sin and death; this definition is a test whereby it may be known, and St. Paul supplies a further definition by the repeated application of the test. A further description is given, as having reference to the life in Christ Jesus; it is described as the spiritual mind in opposition to a former condition, as the carnal mind. Again, the carnal mind is said to be death, the spiritual mind life, and that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*" It further declares men "are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God," or Spirit of life, "dwell in them." And again, "If any man have not the

Spirit of Christ he is none of His." Now the question which arises in regard to this language is, Does water baptism produce the state of mind of "life and peace" described as spiritually minded? If it does not, then the Spirit of life in Christ has not been conveyed by water baptism.

The new life described is accepted by divines as a scriptural truth, and to which they apply the term conversion. Men who are truly converted characters, say divines, have this Spirit of life in Christ; these are they to whom the Apostle's words apply, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them" which are thus in Christ Jesus. But, say divines, this is the fruition of a germ which is sacramentally given. In reply to this, what says the Apostle? "If any man have not the Spirit of life described he is none of Christ's." Can a man have a germ of life in Christ and yet be none of His? Surely the answer is obvious. With regard to sacramental agency, we have disposed of the question of a mediating priesthood, and have arrived at the conclusion that a separated section claiming to mediate is foreign to Christianity. As there is no mediating body, so there is no sacramental channel of union whereby the life in Christ is conveyed.

Divines assert, and the Church Catechism is framed upon a belief, that ritual baptism not only baptises with water, but with, at the same time, the Holy Ghost. The operation of the Spirit is recognised as an independent act, and as producing conversion; but it is also declared that the baptism of the Spirit accompanies water baptism. The statement of Paul, of "the one body baptised by the One Spirit," is the foundation of this belief. Though the body is described as perfect and without blemish, which may well have created a doubt, yet, as only "one baptism" presented itself to their consideration, they have believed that the baptism of the Spirit was also the baptism of water. Divines have not perceived that there are three separate and distinct baptisms; they have not, therefore, discovered that the "one baptism of the One Spirit," spoken of by Paul, is a baptism wholly independent

of water baptism. Viewing "the doctrine of baptisms" from the point which presents only "one baptism," they connect with water baptism every expression in relation to baptism as pertaining to ritual baptism. That the "one baptism of the Spirit" is not water baptism, experience testifies. The one baptism maintains the perfect covenant, wherein all are taught of God, and by which the Church is made blameless and holy, and is unassailable by Satan. Water baptism never has, nor ever will produce such a Church.

And yet St. John writes,—"There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and *these three agree in one*" (1 John v. 8). This declaration would lead to a belief in the unity and common efficacy of Spirit, water, and blood. But St. John does not mean this. God had predetermined that water and blood should be symbols of attestation to His kingdom. God appeared as Christ in a human form, from which issued water and blood; the one a symbol of purity, the other of life. These in Christ's person were made to bear witness on earth. To complete the attestation, Christ instituted water to be the agent in a rite symbolically employed to cleanse; as He did also wine, the emblem of blood, symbolically to nourish; and these were to attest, or bear witness on earth; together with these, the Spirit bears witness. They are not said to be of equal import, but are said "to agree in one:" to agree in that "they bear witness in earth" to the truth of Christ's mission.

Spirit and water, though alike bearing witness in earth, are very different in their operations, as they are in their effects. Our Lord implies this in His discourse with Nicodemus. The one he would show is material, the other etherial or spiritual. In reference to the declaration, "Ye must be born again, of water and of the Spirit," He declared "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He does not distinctly say, that to be born of water is only equivalent

with being born of the flesh; but as His words had reference to the declaration about being born again, the words could scarcely have any other meaning; and that they had this meaning, the further explanation affords reason for believing. The birth of the Spirit is described as "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence it cometh*, and whither it goeth." Every one born of the Spirit has the manifestation produced in an unseen manner, "thou canst not tell whence it cometh." If it were produced as a result of water baptism, it could be seen from whence it cometh. The palpable form of water baptism, as contrasted with the unseen character of Spirit baptism, points it out as being separate and independent.

Indeed, water and Spirit baptisms are independent of each other, as is, independent of both, another baptism—the baptism of suffering. God works in a mysterious way, and these several baptisms are administered as He thinks fit. Sometimes one precedes, sometimes another; they have no necessary union and dependance.

The Scriptures make mention also of another baptism—that of fire. John the Baptist declared of Christ that He should baptise "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The couplative conjunction points them out as separate baptisms, and, in a sense, they are separate; in another sense they are one. Baptism by fire, as on the day of Pentecost, was a manifestation of baptism of the Holy Ghost. In Apostolic times, a visible descent in tongues of fire proclaimed the descent of the Holy Ghost. They saw, in this way, the Holy Ghost conferred (Acts viii. 18). In another sense Christ baptises with fire. He consumes the nature derived from the first Adam, and is, in this sense, as a consuming fire. And this is the meaning of Paul (1 Cor. iii. 13-15), "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is,"—"every man's work shall be revealed by fire." But of the baptism of fire, in either sense, we need not now concern ourselves. It will be enough that we

confine ourselves to the three baptisms which operate personally on individual men.

The doctrine of three baptisms is opposed apparently to the declaration of Paul, "one faith, one baptism." It is but an apparent opposition. As we have before stated, the word "baptism" is applied in Scripture as the words "church" and "kingdom" are. They are each employed in more than one sense. Thus, baptism is used for the administration of a rite, for an influence of the Holy Spirit, and for a course of trial and suffering.

It is not necessary to show that the word baptise is used in reference to these several meanings. Divines readily acknowledge it. But though they acknowledge it, they theoretically and practically apply these all to one, or ritual baptism; and so it is, they assert that ritual baptism buries, cleanses, and rises again man's nature. Ritual baptism has no such effects. It needs ordinarily a baptism of suffering, and a Spirit baptism, to bring them about.

Though not necessary to show the threefold use to which the word is applied, it is necessary to show that the three baptisms are distinct and separate. As instances of the separate baptism of the Holy Ghost may be mentioned, that on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.); that when Peter preached to the Gentiles, on whom the Holy Ghost fell, prior to ritual baptism (Acts x. 44-48); and that ritual baptism does not convey a baptism of the Holy Ghost, it is expressly declared, "for as yet He (the Holy Ghost) was fallen upon none of them: *only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (Acts viii. 16). With this decisive declaration, it appears wondrous how men can assert that ritual baptism comprises a baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Of the baptism of suffering may be mentioned the worthies of Scripture. God loveth whom He chasteneth. By the baptism of suffering the old Adam is buried, as by the baptism of the Holy Ghost the new Adam is raised up. The temptation in the wilderness, and the sufferings of our Lord, typified and exhibited the baptism of suffering. It is by this baptism the old Adam is

crucified. We are made perfect through suffering. Even the sinless One was made perfect through sufferings (Heb. ii. 9-18, Heb. v. 7-9); though sinless, yet having received humanity into the Godhead, "it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." It is the appointed means whereby the mortal body is made dead unto sin. As we are partakers of flesh and blood, and subject to the law of sin in the members, so Christ likewise partook of the same nature, that through the death of this nature He might destroy him that had the power of death. The baptism of suffering is irrespective and independent of ritual baptism. The words of our Lord to James and John infer this, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?" (Mark x. 38). The baptism here mentioned is the baptism of suffering: were it not so, the inquiry put to them has no force. Our Lord could not refer to water baptism, to which they could readily submit, but to a baptism which occasioned the words, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done." Christ's body is purified by suffering, and to James and John, as members, our Lord concluded his discourse by "ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and the baptism that I am baptised with shall ye be baptised."

This baptism it is by which men are buried with Christ into death. It is the baptism by which the old Adam is crucified. By this are the disciples planted together in the likeness of Christ's death. The old man is crucified that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth sin should not be served. They who are thus dead "are freed from sin." They are "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The corrupt nature, under the law of sin in the members, has been buried with Christ by this baptism into death; and they who have been planted in the likeness of His death, shall,

like as Christ was raised up from the dead, be also partakers of the resurrection. They rise in newness of life. They have undergone a change; the old man has been buried, and the new man raised up. The "*so many*" that have been baptised *into* Christ have been thus baptized into His death; and by the baptism into Him their nature has been changed into the similitude of His resurrection. They have thus present life in Christ, and are "alive unto God" (Rom. vi.).

This it is which explains the language of Paul in the 2 Cor. iv. He is expatiating on the distresses, perplexities, persecutions, and troubles on every side which he experienced. He says that "the glorious Gospel," the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is a treasure we have "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of ourselves." For this it is we are distressed here. We are subject to the baptism of suffering that we may bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." The suffering to which we are here subject, carries about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and it does so, that we might be renovated in His life; and Paul further declares, that "we *which live* are *alway* delivered *unto death* for Jesu's sake, that *the life* also of Jesus might be made *manifest* in our *mortal flesh.*" Paul is not meaning that the death to which we are delivered is mortal death, but the death which has already commenced by the crucifying, by the baptism of suffering, the nature derived from the first Adam; and this is plain from the declaration that the life of Jesus, or from the second Adam, should be manifest in the *mortal* flesh. The death has relation to the life, and it is, therefore, a death which precedes the life; and as the life is manifested here, so the death has been already experienced. The Spirit of God operates upon man to bring him to a sense of entire dependance, and this is *alway* by suffering. Not of one kind, but of varied suffering, as it seemeth fit unto God. By this men carry about in the body the dying of

the Lord Jesus, and by which "the outward man perishes," and "the inward man is renewed day by day." The treasure is in earthen vessels, and which vessels are subject to decay, and for this reason "death worketh in us" by troubles on every side, so that the outward man perishes. "The death which worketh in us" is by the baptism of suffering unto death. We are thus baptised into Christ's death. It is not by water baptism we are baptised into His death, but by the baptism of suffering, "the bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."

The baptism of the Holy Ghost, the baptism of suffering, and ritual baptism, are independent of each other; they are three separate and independent baptisms. I am not meaning that they are independent as connected in one person, but they are independent with respect to the principle of each, and as regards time and circumstances. They have, in truth, no necessary connection and dependence.

In apparent opposition to this, is the declaration of Paul—"one baptism." As the doctrine of *baptisms*, or of manifold baptisms, is not hypothetical, but capable of demonstrative proof, as we have seen, the question is, What does Paul mean by one baptism? If we examine the epistles to the Ephesians and to the Corinthians, wherein the one baptism is declared, we shall find that he is wholly speaking of Spirit baptism—the true and vital baptism; and that he makes no mention of ritual baptism a symbol thereof. To the Corinthians he is writing about spiritual gifts, and to the Ephesians about "the Church which is Christ's body, the fulness of Him which filleth all in all." In the fourth chapter to the Ephesians he tells "the faithful in Christ Jesus" to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, and to keep *the unity of the Spirit* in the bond of peace. Now, what did Paul mean by the unity of the Spirit? Did he mean that confused unity which Christendom presents? Certainly not. He meant a unity, not nominal, but real: a unity of the Spirit, by which "there is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

By the unity of the Spirit is "the God and Father of all, through all, and in all." By the operation of the Spirit are all the faithful united. It is not a unity such as the ecclesiastical Church presents, having varied faiths; but it is the unity of a body of one faith—faith in "the God and Father of all." All lesser faiths merge into this. It is a unity of the Spirit enfolding and embracing the several members of the "one body." The Spirit works through varied members: "some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." But all the saints are maintained in one faith, and one body, by one baptism of the one Spirit.

St. Paul is plainly meaning the one baptism of the one Spirit, without reference to water baptism. If the one baptism to preserve unity had been water baptism, so much doubt would not have been permitted to hang over the rite. If a ceremonial rite had been so all-important to maintain unity, a doubt would not have been permitted to exist whether believer adult baptism be only valid, or whether unconscious infants be proper recipients. That water baptism has been placed in a dubious position argues an inferior relation. It would be contrary to the whole teaching throughout the Scriptures to assign to a rite the preserving of unity in a spiritual kingdom. The all-important one baptism to the unity of the body is not, then, water baptism. It is what St. Paul, in another part, declares "the baptism of the one Spirit." In conformity with this is the doctrine laid down by St. John: "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." These spirits are drawn unto Christ by God. They are baptised of the Spirit, and by this baptism is the unity of the one body in one faith maintained "in the unity of the Spirit."

The one baptism of Paul is the true vital baptism. Water baptism is also a true baptism, but it is a symbol only of the deeper reality. It is not "the sign of the thing signified," as

supposed, because it does not represent the reality; but it is a symbol only of the reality.

From commingling and confounding the three baptisms, expressions which are meant to apply to either the baptism of the Spirit, or the baptism of suffering, are indiscriminately applied to water baptism. Thus it is, a general opinion prevails, that water baptism baptises into Christ; and that, if duly adminstered, regeneration is a consequence. The Bishop of Exeter, in his Declaration, writes, "baptised *into* even the body of Jesus Christ;" and no doubt this is a doctrine of the Church of England. Carson, the Anabaptist, also writes, though not in similar words, in effect the same.* Not only in the passage quoted below, but throughout his book, the doctrine of incorporation is recognised. Upon this principle it is that Anabaptists exercise great care to baptise only faithful believers. They seek to preserve their community unstained. They have not discovered that God has declared He keeps in his own hands the maintenance of the spotless body. As we shall show, they misread the commission of our Lord, by which they limit and contract the Gospel scheme. Churchmen expand, Anabaptists contract it.

Be it observed, that the commission to baptise, misunderstood to be *into Christ*, is in *the name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. xxviii. 19). By this commission

* "But that believers only can be baptised by this commission, is clear from that *into* which they are said to be baptised: 'Baptising them *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' It is into the faith and subjection of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that men are to be baptised. Surely none can be baptised into the faith and subjection of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but adults. Infants cannot believe nor express subjection. About the glorious doctrine imported in these words, we have no dispute. *On this all-important point we have one mind.* And I joyfully profess that I embrace as brethren in Christ all who are united with me in that doctrine, and the truths imported in it."—*Carson on Baptism*, p. 174.

men are baptised "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 16), Jesus uniting in Himself the triple manifestations of God. The commission is limited to baptise "in the name," or, if it be more satisfactory to casuists, the preposition may be altered to into, but still the commission is limited "into *the name of*."

A portion of Scripture much relied upon, as furnishing evidence that ritual baptism was appointed to incorporate into Christ, is 1 Cor. xii., and that because it asserts Christ's body to be composed of varied members. Let us try to understand it.

In the chapter which precedes, Paul condemns the sensual way in which some of the Corinthians partook of the Lord's Supper; and he taught them that they must receive it spiritually, and not grossly and carnally, or it tended to condemnation. He then opens the chapter under consideration with the subject of spiritual gifts: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." He goes on to explain what he means by spiritual gifts: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The foundation of spiritual gifts is a recognition of the divine principle, "the law of God." All having this law in their hearts could not call Jesus accursed, in whom it was so eminently exhibited; and all who can say Jesus is the Lord, does so by direct influence of the Holy Spirit of God: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." It is the Holy Spirit that influences to a knowledge of the divine principle, as also of the Deity in Christ Jesus. The foundation stone of spiritual life is the knowledge of the law of God implanted by the Spirit of God, taught in various ways, but ever taught by the Spirit. This originates and sustains membership with Christ's body. Water baptism does not originate membership; it may help thereto; it may be instrumental as an appointed means of gathering within a circle of influence. It is not the appointed channel necessarily

to convey. No channel is appointed as a sole medium. The Spirit of God operates upon the heart in various ways: "There are *differences of administrations*, but the same Lord. And there are *diversities of operations*, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." Having shown the origin of "the one body," in "the manifestation of the Spirit," Paul goes on to show that to several members are diversities of gifts: "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Though the administrations are different, and there are diversities of operations, yet it is by the selfsame Spirit that all the members are influenced. They are all led by the Spirit of God, and are, therefore, the sons of God: "By One Spirit they are all baptised into one body." "Whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free," whether ritually baptised or not, they have been "all made to drink into One Spirit."

The unity in this body consists in love to God: and, as a necessary consequence, a love of His righteous laws. Water baptism is not concerned with it. God hath "set the members, every one of them, in the body, as it hath pleased Him." In this body, to our ideas, are uncomely parts; but God "hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked." Consequently we are taught meekness and lowliness of heart, a compassionate love, a tender regard for the uncomely parts. We are to covet earnestly the best gifts, to strive in the Christian race, but yet is shown a more excellent way, that there may be no schism in the body. Faith and Hope are in their way admirable, but above them is Charity; the charity which thinketh no evil, is not easily provoked, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; the charity which goeth on unto "perfection."

The "feeble members" are just as necessary to this body as are the strong. It may be thought, as it has been thought, that "the less honourable" constitute the bad in the mixed kingdom of the good and bad, the tares and the wheat, and that Paul is

writing about the mixed body, the ritually baptised. The existence of less honourable members would indicate this. But observe, St. Paul does not *call* them less honourable, but they whom *we think* less honourable. In God's eyes they are all honourable. Though the gifts to each differ, yet are they all members of one body made to drink into One Spirit.

It is evident that the baptism of the One Spirit is not a water baptism, from the fact that St. Paul, in the opening chapter of the same epistle, thanks God he "baptised none of them, save Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanus." If water baptism conferred so great blessing as unity, and the varied gifts to Christ's body, it is very improbable, nay, it would be unseemly in Paul to thank God he had not been instrumentally employed in conveying these inestimable benefits. And so, likewise, if ritual baptism incorporated into Christ, the same remark applies. If ritual baptism united to Christ corporately, it would be matter of great congratulation to be instrumental therein. It is clear that the baptism which baptises into the one body is not a baptism: Paul thanks God he did not administer. In another part of this epistle he writes, "as a wise master builder, he laid the foundation," and that "another buildeth thereon." Now the foundation he laid, by his own disclaimer, was not ritual baptism. He did not profess, as do high churchmen, to give the germ of life by baptism, but by conveying a knowledge of Jesus Christ. His office was to preach, to lay a foundation in knowledge: it is the office of "another" to build thereon. The foundation he laid was not in baptism, but by preaching the Word.

It is declared, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular;" and it is held that these words are addressed to a corrupt body, and that the language of Paul has reference to the ritually baptised. In answer to this, we refer to the second number on the Unity and Purity of the Church. It must also be remembered, that there are grades in the progress of the inner man day by day: there is the babe in Christ, as well

as the man of full stature. In the body of Christ are weak members; as Paul declares, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." But though sickly they were called according to God's purpose; and whom He called, them He justified; and whom He justified, them He glorified. The early converts to Christianity were ignorant of the Divine laws, yet were believers in Christ; they were "called to be saints," and they did "call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." They were governed for a time by some of their previous pagan notions. As babes in Christ, they had been fed with milk, and not with meat. They were incapable, all at once, of rising to the full stature in Christ. But that the pollutions among them, and which Paul condemned, were given up, we read in the seventh chapter of the next epistle. They sorrowed after "a godly sort unto repentance," which wrought "great carefulness in them;" so that Paul could write, "I rejoice, therefore, that I have confidence in you in all things."

There is no reason to believe that the baptism into one body is intended to mean water baptism; but there is every reason to believe Paul's declaration, receiving it literally: "For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body."

Water does not baptise into Christ; it baptises only "*in the name*" of Christ. The Spirit alone baptises into Christ. Ritual baptism does not, as the catechism, and as the formulary for baptism assert, baptise with the Holy Ghost.

The commission to the disciples was, "Go ye, baptise all nations *in the name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In *the name* of the Triune, or triple manifestations of the One God, who is the Christ, or God with us, was the commission given. In conformity with this, the early Christians baptised converts "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 16; Acts xix. 5). No commission was given to baptise into the Lord Jesus, but in, or into, the name only. To baptise into Jesus, God has reserved to Himself: "No man

can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The power to unite to the one body God retains. Hence the unity of the Church. By one baptism are all the members baptised by "one Spirit into one body." Not only do all who pretend to this power exceed the commission to baptise, but they exhibit, in the scheme their principles establish, the fulfilment of the prophecy—"The faithful city is become an harlot;" the "silver is become dross;" the "wine is mixed with water."

That the baptism of the Spirit does not accompany ritual baptism is unequivocally declared. We are expressly told of the Samaritan converts who had been baptised of water, and to whom the Holy Ghost was afterwards conveyed by imposition of hands, "that as yet He was fallen upon none of them: *only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (Acts viii. 16). This is an explicit declaration, and should set the matter at rest. It is so decisive that a question about it ought never to have been raised. Far from creating a doubt, it sets a doubt that may arise at rest.

By a misty conception, the transmission of the Holy Ghost is said to be a holy and ghostly authority. We know of no ghostly authority. The transmission of the Holy Ghost was by the agency of a power granted to the Apostolic age, and manifested itself in cloven tongues of fire; and this manifestation followed the laying on of hands of Peter and John upon the Samaritan converts after they had received ritual baptism.

The same took place at Ephesus with the Ephesian converts (Acts xix.). The relation here more intimately connects the laying on of hands with ritual baptism. But after the express declaration in reference to the Samaritan converts, there can be no doubt that the laying on of hands *succeeded* the rite of baptism of the Ephesian disciples. It was not the rite conveyed the Holy Ghost, but the Apostolic hands after baptism.

There is an expression in connection with the relation of the Ephesians which would seem to infer that the Holy Ghost accom-

panies the rite. They are asked if they had received the Holy Ghost, and they reply "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost;" and Paul said unto them, "Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, unto John's baptism." Paul advises them that "they should believe on Him that should come after John, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them they received the Holy Ghost."

Now this relation does look as though, in the act of baptising, Paul laid his hands upon the Ephesian disciples, and the Holy Ghost fell on them. But it is more consistent to think, from the declaration concerning the Samaritans, that after Paul had baptised the Ephesians, he laid his hands upon them to bless them to convey the Holy Ghost. They were faithful believers. They had been baptised with the baptism of John—"the baptism of repentance;" and when Christ was declared to them they avowed their belief in Him, and were baptised in His name. They were repentants, and baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, and, agreeably with the promise to believers, received the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 33), so that they spake with tongues, and prophesied or taught. A baptism in the name of Jesus, if received in faith, is the earnest or pledge of God's approval. As an instituted rite, it becomes a language of intercommunion, and is an assurance that the Comforter will be sent. When observed from love to God, as an act of love, the Spirit of truth is granted in conformity with the promise (John xiv. 15-26). The Ephesian converts were faithful and honest disciples, as we gather not only from the relation in the Acts, but from St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, and from our Lord's declaration to John (Rev. ii. 1-7).

But that the Holy Ghost accompanies the rite by pre-appointment, or as a necessary appendage, is most unscriptural. The decisive declaration that He was fallen upon none of the Samaritan baptised, places this beyond doubt. It was not their ritual

baptism "in the name of" which conveyed the Holy Ghost, but the imposition of Paul's hands after baptism. The promise of our Lord was thus fulfilled in Paul, as a faithful member of His body, and to the Ephesian converts as true believers and faithful members (John xiv. and xv.) Water baptism was not made the medium of communication, but Paul the faithful member in Christ's body.

To be baptised in "the name of," and to be baptised "into Christ," are very different operations. The error into which Christians have fallen is that of intermingling and confounding them. By confounding them, a new birth of the Spirit has been attributed to ritual baptism. It is true that the new birth, said to be given, is something unlike conversion. Nevertheless, the new birth, sacramentally given, is said to be a new birth of the Spirit. If the new birth be of the Spirit, a change is the result. Whether this change be called the new birth, regeneration, or conversion, is of little moment; the change is out of the old into the new Adam. If ritual baptism does not baptise into, but simply "in the name of," the new Adam, a change of nature has not been effected.

The change from the old to the new man is nowhere in the Scriptures proclaimed to be a result of water baptism. Water baptism is never said to confer the new birth. It is conferred not by a sensible rite, but by an invisible agency.

Let us first see what the new birth is described as; and here I am glad to avail myself of the opportunity to confess an obligation to a recent publication for aid.*

It is described as—

A new creation (Gal. vi. 15).

A spiritual resurrection (Eph. ii. 5, 6).

A new life (Rom. vi. 4).

A new heart (Ezek. xxxvi. 26).

* Dictionary of Scripture Parallels.

A new spirit (Eph, iv. 23, 24).

Putting off the old man, and putting on the new (Eph. iv. 22—24).

Being born of God (1 John v).

Being born of the Spirit (Rom. viii. 15).

Being a partaker of the Divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4).

A hidden life with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3).

The inward man being renewed (Rom vii. 22).

Circumcision of the heart (Rom. ii. 29).

The washing of regeneration (Titus iii. 5).

In all these descriptions of the new birth, that of the washing of regeneration only has any reference to water; and this has only an apparent and not a real reference. The washing of regeneration is an expression in allusion to the water of life figuratively employed in Scripture to denote the cleansing efficacy of union with Christ. "The washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," is "the putting off the old man and putting on the new:" it is "the circumcision of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter;" it is "the Jew inwardly," and not the Jew outwardly. It is not the work of ritual baptism, but it is the work of God. In no part of Scripture is regeneration, or the new birth, said to be the work of water baptism.

It is the work—

Of God (Ezek. xxxvi. 26; John i. 13; 2 Cor. v. 17, 18; Ephes. ii. 5; James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 3).

Of Christ (1 John ii. 29).

Of the Holy Ghost (John iii. 6; Titus iii. 5).

It is effected by means of—

The word of God (James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23; 1 Peter ii. 2).

The ministry of the Gospel (1 Cor. iv. 15; Phil. v. 10).

Of the will of God (John i. 13; James i. 18).

Of the mercy of God (Titus iii. 5; 1 Peter i. 3).

Nowhere in the Scriptures is it said to be the work of, or effected by, ritual baptism.

Then as to what it produces—

Likeness to Christ (Rom. viii. 29).
Likeness to God (Ephes. iv. 24-32).
Knowledge of God (Heb. viii. 10, 11).
Obedience to God's commandments (Acts v. 32).
Hatred and rejection of sin (1 John iii.).
Love to God (1 John v.).
Brotherly love (1 John iv.).
Righteousness and holiness (Col. iii. 10-14).
Affection for things above (Rom. viii. 5).
Victory over the world (1 John v. 4).
Victory over sin and Satan (1 John v. 18).

Only a few texts are referred to; many others may be mentioned. In fact, the uniform testimony of Scripture accords with these. Tried by the standard these declarations establish, can it be said ritual baptism has given the new birth? Centuries of experience attest the reverse.

The position which Churchmen maintain is not relieved by asserting that the fruits exhibited are the result of conversion, and that the new birth which they advocate is something different. We know of only one new birth as a living reality. The new birth of water is a type of the reality, an emblem of a truth. There is but one vital new birth—the change out of the nature derived from the first Adam into the nature of the spiritual Abraham or the second Adam. The new birth of water does not convey this: it conveys a change in name, not a change in the nature. The vital baptism, which alone gives new birth of the Spirit, changes the nature. To be born of water and of the Spirit are two things. If they are not two, our Lord's declaration, "Except a man be born of water, *and* of the Spirit," has not simplicity and truth. If to be born of water is to be born of the Spirit, the couplative is unnecessary. The

couplative indicates a double birth. But then the two births are not real births; nor are they necessarily connected, and still less consentaneous. The new birth of water is a birth in name; the new birth of the Spirit is a change of nature. The one is a new birth "in the name of the Lord Jesus," the other is a new birth *into* Christ. The one is by a visible action, the other by an invisible agency. The one is connected with the flesh, the other with the Spirit. And so our Lord declared "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

In order that we may distinguish between the two baptisms, we have the marks given us as the result of Spirit baptism. The marks, as we have seen, produce altogether a change of character. They are summed up by Paul in the words, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. viii.). In these words is declared the great truth which the whole chapter maintains, in unison with the whole Gospel, that without Spirit baptism there is no union with Christ, and that with union a change of character invariably follows.

The life which Churchmen claim to give as a result of ritual baptism, is a life which by their own admission may die out. In this respect is it different from the new life of the Spirit. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is a life which cannot die out. The baptism of the Spirit produces a heartfelt belief in Christ, and he that believeth on the Son hath *everlasting* life" (John iii. 16); and again, our Lord declared, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John x. 27-29.)

The "one baptism" of Paul is undoubtedly Spirit baptism. No other baptism can give unity to the "one body." Water baptism has never conveyed unity, or one faith to one body, and never will. It was not instituted with that object. It was instituted for an object it will not fail to accomplish. The prophecies point to a future when greater unity and peace and love shall prevail; but then not as a result directly of water baptism. Water baptism will be an agent therein, but not the efficient cause. The efficient cause will be a larger out-pouring of the grace of God's Holy Spirit. "God will put His Spirit in men, and they shall live." (Ezek. xxxvii.)

Taking the high church theory as a basis of theological truth, that is, the theory which recognises the Great Head of the Church acting through a deputed body, giving a god-like unerring wisdom and power, and an infallibility resulting therefrom, where has been exhibited "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?" Has the "one baptism," as administered by the ecclesiastical body, had the effect of producing such an unity as described by Paul? Does not the ecclesiastical church exhibit any and everything but unity.

If ecclesiastical hands baptise into new life, if they convey an inchoative germ, the merest speck of a living principle, the state of the ecclesiastical church and of Christendom presents the fact that the germ is of uncertain character. Every kind of life springs out of it, and these bear their several fruits, the lusts of the flesh. Now this life cannot be of the character of the life of the Spirit. The life exhibited, as too frequently following ritual baptism, is under the dominion of the law of sin in the members, and Paul says, if ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under this law; he lays down the marks by which the two opposite conditions may be distinguished, and concludes "they that are Christ's" (that is led of the Spirit, or baptised by the one Spirit) "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. v.)

In the ecclesiastical church are men of every moral hue; some

led by the Spirit of God; some led of the spirit of evil; supposing them to transmit of the power to which respectively they give allegiance, in accordance with the claimed prerogative of a mediating body, then may be explained in this way the origin of a vast amount of evil. But this is idle. In truth there is no mediating transmitting body. There are two laws operating upon every son of Adam, and these laws, as the one or the other predominates, so is there life or no life. A mediating body to transmit either of the one or of the other is a monstrous fallacy. There is no body deputed to transmit. Men are commissioned to give a new birth of water in the name of, but this does not empower to give new life in Christ. There is no transmissive power in men, save to teach; "go, baptise; teaching." They have a power to lay the foundation for new life in knowledge. In the past they have failed to do this. Herein is the cause why the mass of evil has not been penetrated and subdued. They have taught that ritual baptism washed away sin, and gave life in Christ, and as no such influence is possessed by water, so the result has been the opposite of that proposed.

The mass of evil which Christendom has ever presented is proof that water baptism does not possess a deputed power to communicate a principle of new life in Christ. If the principle were sown, it would germinate and bear its fruits. But, alas! how many millions have been baptised in Christ's name, who have never presented the fruits which accompany union with Christ.

Opposed to the doctrine of a transmissive agency in men are the declarations of Scripture. "No man can come unto me, said Jesus, unless the Father draw him;" and again, unless men "eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, they have no life in them;" that is, unless drawn by the Spirit by which true union is created there is no new life. Christ "is the bread of life," and those only nourished in Him have life. Men may prophesy or teach in His name, and do many wonderful works in His name, and yet be far from Him. They may be externally

allied, and acknowledge Christ, and minister in His name, and yet Christ may profess unto them, "I never knew you." If Christ knew them not, they had no life in them, and could not transmit it to others. The Gospel, throughout, teaches that the Spirit alone gives life. It is the Spirit which maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. It is the Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom. viii. 27). They that love God are the called, and the called are the justified. These are they who on earth are "the conformed to the image of the Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren." These are led by the Spirit of God, and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" they have received the new birth, and have entered into heirship, "the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God: and if children then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ." Compare with the 8th of Romans, the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of St. John, and it will be manifest to a careful and prayerful reader that water baptism does not entitle to heirship. The title comes through the baptism of the one Spirit, whereby the sons of God are enabled to cry "Abba, Father."

It is by the baptism of the One Spirit into the one body which entiles to heirship, and not by a transmissive agency by authorized hands through ritual baptism. Paul has used the term "one baptism" to signify the influence of the Spirit; he is not meaning water baptism. There is no reference to water baptism. He is writing "concerning Spiritual gifts," and he does not in any way allude to ritual baptism. When our Lord said, "My kingdom is not of this world," there was, and is, a reality conveyed which men generally have not received. Christ's kingdom is purely spiritual, and, therefore, called an everlasting kingdom. External aids and helps in connection with the time state, or flesh and blood kingdom, are instituted, but they have no true or abiding relation to His kingdom; and

they are external helps. They are not internal mediums through which the Spirit operates. The Spirit operates through unseen mediums: "As the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Jesus Christ never baptised with water (John iv. 2); and this is significant. It is His office to baptise with the Holy Ghost. If water baptism were co-ordinate with Spirit baptism, then may our Lord have baptised with water. If it had been intended to make ritual baptism a medium of communicating new life by a transmissive agency, the probability is Christ would have originated it. But he did not originate new life in water baptism; he originated it in Himself, and transmits it by His own direct act: now through an unseen medium;* in the apostolic age, sometimes in visible demonstration. Water baptism had no power given it to convey the Holy Ghost.

It is not asserted that no grace attends, at any time, water

* "The Scriptures nowhere refer us to the time or manner of our regeneration for evidence that we are regenerated. If the time and manner of our regeneration were certainly known by us, it is intuitively evident, that our regeneration itself would be equally well known. If this, then, were the case, it is incredible that the Scriptures should not, *even in a single instance*, refer us to so completely satisfactory a source of evidence, to determine us finally in this mighty concern; but should, at the same time, direct us to the so much less perfect evidence, furnished by the subsequent state of our affections and conduct. "By their fruits shall ye know them," says our Saviour. "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye keep my commandments." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven, is my disciple." These are the rules by which, together with others of exactly the same nature, we are directed to the Scriptures to judge of our moral state. But these rules are not only superfluous, but useless, if the time, the manner, or the fact of our regeneration were ordinarily known by us. For these, and each of these, would furnish evidence of this subject completely decisive as to the state of all men. He who knew these things would certainly know that he was a Christian: he

baptism. It is an ordained rite, and a blessing is promised to faith and obedience. A blessing therefore follows the performance of this or any other command of God. But what is asserted is, that it is not an appointed channel for communicating new life. New life is obtained in Christ, and water baptism does not baptise into Christ; it baptises only in the name of Christ. And further, there is no grace tied to the ceremonial as a necessary appendage. If those to whom it is administered are not led by the Spirit of God, "they are none of His:" and God does not confer grace upon the children of disobedience. In the kingdom of grace, "neither circumcision or uncircumcision availeth, but a new creature." Now, a new creature is the result of the operation of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Ritual baptism does not baptise with the law of the Spirit of life. The harmony which reigns through the spiritual kingdom would be disturbed by a sensual act conveying a spiritual influence.

Divines who read every expression in the Scriptures in connection with a baptism, refer each and all to ritual baptism. Thus Paul's words, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death?" "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ;" have been received as declarations that ritual baptism baptises into Christ. Not perceiving that the language of Paul has reference to other than ritual baptism, it naturally follows to be received, that Paul asserts the rite to baptise into Christ. But these expressions, so far from asserting this, imply just the

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who did not, would certainly know that he was not a Christian. No other rule, therefore, could ever be needed, or could ever be employed According to this scheme, then, Christ and the Apostles have devised an imperfect rule to direct us in our decisions concerning this interesting subject; while uninspired men of modern times have, by their ingenuity, fortunately found out a perfect one.—*Dwight's Theology*, p. 395.

reverse. They imply that all whom Paul addresses have been ritually baptised, but only so many, as yet, spiritually baptised. Instead of proofs that the rite baptises into Christ, they create doubts. If the words were, As many as have been baptised in the Lord Jesus have put on Christ, there would be no doubt created. But, far from this, the arrangement creates misgivings. The "so many," and the "as many," put a limit upon a smaller number comprised within a greater. They seem to affirm all have been ritually baptised "in the name of," but few, or only so many, "into Christ." And this they do declare. They do not say all ritually baptised have put on Christ, but the so many baptised into Christ have put on Christ. The words create a distinction between baptising "in the name of," and baptising into. If the passages in connection with these words be examined, the expressions will be found to restrict and limit the number baptised into Christ to those who, in Paul's words, "have put on Christ." In both the chapters (Rom. vi., Gal. iii.) it will be found Paul is condemning sin, and asserting that so many as have been baptised into Christ do not commit sin; that if we are baptised into Christ, and thus "have been planted in His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." If baptised into Christ, then baptised into His death, and thus freed from sin, that the mortal body may be quickened after the likeness of Christ's resurrection.

It is no argument to assert that Paul addresses the Churches as the saints, and the called according to God's purpose; and that, as the elect, they would be baptised of the Holy Ghost. No doubt they would, at some time, be so baptised, but not at any given time, or by the act of water baptism. We have seen that no rule governs in this matter. An elect and chosen one of God may run a course of great wickedness before his

mind may be awakened to a sense of his position. The language of Paul contemplates this, and is framed accordingly.

To give new life through water baptism is consistent with the ecclesiastical theory; but such a doctrine finds no place in the Gospel. Water baptism leaves the baptised what he was before, excepting that he has a new name given him, which styles him Christian. By this he is "baptised only in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Though water baptism is not instituted to convey the Holy Ghost, or the influence of the Holy Spirit, yet it must not be denied that it may be made an instrument, or agent. There are no limits to God's power, or to God's course of acting with men. If a man be called to the knowledge of Christ during water baptism, the rite does not convey as a sacramental appointed channel, it is made for the occasion a medium of communication. This is only saying that the rite is placed on a footing with any and every agency. The Spirit of God is the immediate operating cause through this, as through any other channel. There are no limits to the modes of conveying an influence of the Spirit. The modes are various; as various as men's minds and characters. An awakened conscience may incite the mind to enquiry, and knowledge conveyed through, or at the time of receiving, a ceremonial rite. But, should this be so, it is not that the rite has a uniform delegated power, but only that it is made an instrument for the occasion.

This is the right view, as it seems to me, of ceremonial influence. To be born of the Spirit needs an especial act of grace. If not born of the Spirit, we are none of Christ's. A ceremonial baptism has not made us His. A new life has not been given by it. The declaration is most decisive, that "They which are *in Christ Jesus* walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" and "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, *he is none of His*;" and "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness;"

and "Ye are not in the body, but in the Spirit, if so be that Christ dwell in you;" and "The mortal bodies shall be quickened by the Spirit that dwelleth in them;" and "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." These "are heirs and joint heirs with Christ." They have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father! "The Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." These are they for whom the Spirit intercedes, and who are the predestinated "to be conformed to the image of the Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren."

Christ died for all men, and all shall ultimately benefit by Christ's Atonement; but only the elect are conformed to the image of God, and are heirs and joint heirs with Him. "He is the Saviour of all men, but *especially* of those that believe." These latter alone have present life—have been born again of the Spirit.

Divines affirm that all ritually baptised are heirs and joint heirs with Christ. They contend that a new life is given at baptism, which constitutes the birthright. The present Bishop of Oxford has printed, among a list of sermons, one on "The Sons of God," founded upon the text quoted from Rom. viii. He upholds, in common with all divines in connection with the Clergy Church, that by ritual baptism "he who was by nature born in sin, and the child of wrath, is hereby made the child of grace." And he asks, How can we teach a child to say "Our Father," and at the same time inculcate a doctrine of non-heirship, except by special grace or election? His lordship contends that "There is—that is, through the gracious act of God—a peculiar indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every Christian, in virtue of which he is the child of God."

In reference to the alleged impropriety of teaching a child to say "Our Father," while at the same time you instruct that they

are not the sons of God, if not led by the Spirit of God, be it observed, that God the Creator is the Father of all. He is the Father not only of the ritually baptised, but he is the Father of the benighted heathen. "Blessed be God, His kingdom ruleth over all." He is the Father of all created spirits, whether born into the outer kingdom of Christ or not. He is the Father of Jew and Gentile. Every son of Adam has been instructed in every age to call Him Father. The great sin in all the past has been that of bowing to other gods, the idol gods, and not before "the God that made the heavens." A child instructed to say "Our Father" is not in virtue of being in an especial manner a child of God, or as born into the nominal kingdom of God on earth, or as ritually baptised; but in virtue of the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

His lordship, it is certain, could not have made the portion of Scripture which declares the special heirship his study, or, with his acute mind, he would have perceived that it relates wholly to the predestinated, to them who, in its own language, "are the called according to God's purpose." It begins with the declaration, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," unless his lordship is prepared to assert that there is no condemnation to the ritually baptised, the declaration must open his mind to the suspicion, that the chapter does not relate to the whole body of nominal Christians. Again, the distinction made between the carnal and the spiritual mind, leading on to the declaration, that "through the Spirit, those who mortify the deeds of the body shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," shew clearly who are the sons of God about whom the Apostle is writing.

The declaration that "There is no condemnation to them which are *in* Christ Jesus," is a further argument in favour of the assertion that ritual baptism does not baptise into Christ. No one presumes to assert that there is no condemnation to those baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost. The declaration is proof that the Scriptures recognize that which we have tried to establish, namely, the essential and marked distinction there is between a baptism of water, and a baptism of the Holy Ghost; between the being baptised "in the name of the Lord Jesus," and the being baptised into Christ; a distinction which leads to the conclusion that ritual baptism does not convey new life.

FAITH IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO A DUE RECEPTION OF THE RITE OF BAPTISM.

ANABAPTISTS* and Churchmen, though so dissimilar in their Church polity, agree in thinking believer baptism only valid. In this respect, Anabaptists, more consistent than Churchmen, act up to their opinion, and demand belief, baptising only professing believers. Churchmen make a show of demanding belief, but accept it through proxies.

A famed writer of the Anabaptists, Mr. Carson, says, he is willing to rest the whole argument upon the words of the commission as given in Mark's Gospel: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Carson writes, "If I had not another passage in the word of God, I would engage to refute my opponents from the words of this commission alone." This is a most important declaration, and if it can be justified, the position taken by Anabaptists is unassailable.

It is necessary to remark, that Mr. Carson assumes the words in Mark to limit the commission to baptise believers. He does not raise a question upon them. He proclaims them to mean that believers only are to be baptised, and he brings them forward

* I use the term as opposed to Pedo-baptists, and not at all by way of reproach. This sect prefer being styled Baptists, but all Christians are Baptists. I am meaning those who advocate believer adult baptism, and oppose infant baptism.

repeatedly, in the course of his argument, to clench an opinion. His views must be correct, he thinks, because, as he asserts, Christ limited the commission to baptise believers.

If Anabaptists are right, the rest of mankind are wrong. Many men, called Christians, are not so even in name. If "the apostolic commission commands the baptism of believers, and of believers only," as Mr. Carson asserts, then is he right that "the invention of man, in baptising infants, has totally set aside the ordinance of God." It is plain that if belief is essential, a proxy belief is insufficient. A proxy belief! What is it? A proxy surety one can understand—a proxy promise, within certain limits, may be realised; but a proxy belief is a vain imagination. No one can be proxy for that which is essentially an inward consciousness, independent and irrespective of others. Belief, or faith, is a state of the soul which others cannot possibly represent. Nor can they promise that it does, or that it shall, exist. Even when apparently exhibited in outward conduct, the nearest approach to represent it by others could be to state, that they believed it to exist. To avow a belief for others capable of belief is inconsistent; and to do so for children incapable of belief is an absurdity. In the nature of things, a proxy belief is impossible.

So much for infant baptism as at present administered by a very large section of Christendom. Nevertheless, we are not going to argue against infant baptism. We believe it to be scriptural. We think the mode of baptising infants unscriptural. It is sometimes asserted that godfathers and godmothers do not make a profession of belief for the child, but this is inconsistent with the whole frame-work of the rite, as administered by the ecclesiastical Church. It is upon the faith of the recipient only that may be declared, "seeing now that this child is regenerate." And this is founded upon the Scripture declaration, that those in whom repentance and faith accompany baptism "shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Upon this ground only can it

be assumed that Spirit and water baptisms are allied. The fact that a proxy belief has been adopted for infant baptism, taken in connection with the framing of the ritual for adult, as for infant baptism, show that belief has been thought essential to the validity of the rite. Is belief *essential* to give validity? The question is not whether it be demanded of adults as a propriety, but whether it is essential? If essential, then is there an end to the controversy as between infant and adult baptism. Adult believer baptism only is valid. By adult, I mean a state of the mental powers capable of belief. Much may be advanced for the propriety of infant baptism, as in accordance with the Gospel scheme, but it must be averred that if believer baptism only is valid, if belief and faith in Christ be established as essential, then is infant baptism no baptism at all.

Let us enter upon the question—Is belief essential?

In primitive Christianity, that belief was expressed prior to the reception of baptism by adults, in most cases, is probable. To demand belief was the general course pursued. This does not establish belief to be essential: it proclaims that it be demanded of adults as a propriety. If, added to this, we find a command to baptise only believers, the apostolic practice, and the command conjointly, show that it was required as a necessity. In the absence of a command, and if the genius of the Gospel does not require it, we may infer that it was demanded as a propriety. That it should be pursued in adult baptism as a propriety may be easily understood. God does not require men who are worshippers of idols to be called after His name. It would produce great scandal, and great confusion, to have mingled in God's nominal kingdom men who openly profess adhesion to idol gods. The practice of demanding belief prior to the administration of baptism to adults is undoubtedly proper; and to demand belief on their own part of such as present children for baptism is likewise proper. These apostolic practices are based in the proprieties and fitness of things. It is desirable that believers

and infants likely to become believers only should be baptised. To sieze hold of and compel heathens to be baptised would be highly improper. Ritual baptism, under such circumstances, would not make them Christians. The course to be pursued is that followed by the Apostles, namely, to teach; and those who gladly receive the Word, to baptise, and, if required, "their households" also. This is in perfect keeping with the commission, "Go teach all nations, baptising them, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

We will not enter upon the question, Were infants baptised in the apostolic age? It has been investigated by almost every writer upon baptism. To ring the changes upon the probabilities were a vain task. There is no express mention of infant baptism in the apostolic records. The terms "households" and all "his family" lead only to conjecture. They may or may not include children or non-electing persons. In the absence of any testimony that these terms comprise infants, no amount of argument will include them.

Admitting that belief should be demanded from adults as a propriety, let us ascend higher, and ascertain if it be required as a necessity. The evidence needful to prove a necessity would be a commaud, or, in the absence of this, that believer baptism should harmonize with the Gospel scheme.

Is there an express command to limit baptism to believers? Carson says, Yes; and he appeals to the words written by St. Mark, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." Do these words convey a command to baptise only believers?

The words themselves certainly do not convey a command limited to baptise only believers; they proclaim a truth as attaching to believers and baptised; they proclaim that he who believes and is baptised, shall be saved. But they do not command to administer baptism only to believers: the words are, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but

he that believeth not shall be damned." In these words can be found no command to baptise only believers. The command is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Here the command ceases. The concluding part of the passage announces truths: "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." * It announces a commendation of believers that are baptised, and a condemnation of unbelievers. There is no command to baptise only believers. This portion of the passage has wholly reference to hearers, or persons addressed, not any to ministers.

In this passage, as in many others, great commendation is bestowed upon believers. Belief, more than baptism, has the saving interest, as shown by contrasting belief and non-belief. Belief and baptism are here coupled in a way which may appear to limit salvation to baptism. From this has been inferred that baptism is necessary to salvation, and acting upon this suggestion, baptism has been confined to avowed believers. But that this is not the meaning of the passage is gathered from what has been already advanced. Salvation, it has been shown, does not depend on ritual baptism.

Nor does the passage declare that belief shall precede baptism. In adult baptism it is rational to conclude that it would, but in many cases it does not, as instanced in the Apostolic narratives.† The belief commanded is not simply the lip avowal, but true heart belief. The words which follow in Mark's Gospel proclaim this. That greater stress is laid upon belief than baptism, we learn from the concluding declarations (Mark xvi. 17, 18). Believers, here as in other parts of Scripture, having large promises made them, which neither here nor elsewhere is made to ritual baptism.

* These words of condemnation, as do some others, apparently oppose the doctrine of universal redemption. They will be explained when we enter upon the subject of life and death.

† Simon Magus, for instance.

Whether the heart belief precedes or succeeds water baptism, the promises are in no way affected.

The commission is somewhat differently given by St. Matthew. It is fuller. The words of our Lord, as conveyed by Matthew, are "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." These words convey the commission in plainer terms than those of St. Mark. The words of Mark refer more to the people than to ministers. The commission in Mark is "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." It does not extend beyond this. If it were not that a promise is given to baptised believers, we should not know from Mark's language that there was a commission given to baptise. It cannot, therefore, with propriety be said that the words of Mark convey a positive command to baptise only believers. To put this construction upon them is to place them, as we shall show, in antagonism to the words as given by St. Matthew.

The words in Matthew really convey the commission; and these, far from limiting baptism to believers, command it to be administered to all. Go, teach *all nations*, baptising *them*, teaching *them*. These words do not limit baptism to believers. They command to teach all nations; and, while being instructed, to baptise; and after baptism, still teach. As I read this commission, I infer that as soon as a nation consents to receive instruction, the command is to baptise that nation, or as many as consent to be taught. Baptise all who show a willingness to become disciples. The commission comprehends all. There are no limits put upon it but what propriety may suggest. The commission authorises the baptism of nations, not alone of heart-believers, but of nations. This view of the commission we shall find to harmonise with the Gospel scheme.

We are warranted in asserting that there is no command to baptise only believers. In the absence of a command, and for a

time considering the commission as enigmatical, though so plainly expressed, let us ask, does the general tenor of Scripture lead to the belief that Christ intended only believers to be baptised?

No doubt the Scriptures lay stress upon believer baptism. Care was exercised under the Apostolic ministry to limit baptism to believers and their households. This has had its intentional influence upon all the past. Necessity was imposed to attach an apparent vital influence to the rite. If it had been presented, in the first place, as a bare initiatory rite, it would have been looked upon by the ignorant as of trifling importance. To have received only the name of Christian, without receiving more substantial good, would have been disregarded. Few would have accepted the rite. Even nominal Christianity would not have advanced: no perceptible movement would have taken place. In an age when great and vital importance was attached to rites and ceremonial worship, to have laid bare the fact that water baptism had no inherent life-giving influence would have been to render the commission nugatory. The language, therefore, with regard to baptisms, is veiled. A symbol is commingled with a reality. A shadow is confused with a substance. An emblem looks to represent, or to be the thing signified. By employing the word baptism in many senses, an initiatory rite appears to stand for and to represent an actual incorporation. The reason why the Scriptures are written thus veiled, no doubt, is to adapt them to the varying phases of human society through successive ages, whereby the purposes of God are worked out. While baptism was held as a saving rite, many incapable of appreciating the Gospel excellencies, and who would refuse to receive it as a mere initiatory rite, would accept it as proffering salvation. By such an interpretation the outer kingdom would advance, Christ's Gospel be made known among men, and the purpose of God be furthered, that "in Christ all nations should be blessed." Upon this principle is rationally explained why a ceremonial worship has been permitted to extend itself. The

great majority of mankind, throughout the past, have been incapable of appreciating the intended worship "in spirit and in truth."

Though the apostles usually demanded belief before they baptised, yet it cannot be discovered that belief is positively required prior to baptism. There is no command to that effect, nor does the genius of the Gospel require it. Indeed, the Gospel scheme rejects it.

The commission is not worded in a manner which would lead to the conclusion that baptism may not be administered but to those in whom faith exists. It favours an opposite conclusion: "Go, teach *all nations*, baptising *them*; teaching *them* to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Teach and baptise, and then teach. It is not teach, and when taught, and faith exists, baptise; but while in the act of teaching baptise. Not a word about baptise only believers. The words of the commission, far from being restrictive, are most comprehensive. Instead of being limited to believers, it embraces all mankind, "all nations."

Though belief was demanded in individual recorded baptisms, yet it is improbable that it was when the first great company was baptised. It was next to impossible that a careful examination could have been entered upon into the state of mind of each of the three thousand baptised on the same day, who were urged thereto by the words of Peter. No more than a demand if willing to receive the rite could have been made; or some general declaration that all who desired baptism should present themselves. The narrative leads to this conclusion. We read that "they that gladly received Peter's words were baptised." A concurrence being expressed to Peter's exhortation, he baptised his hearers. The principle which guided Peter was to baptise all who received willingly his teaching.

The expansion of this principle we find in after narratives, wherein it is found that "households" were baptised. It may be confessed that there is no evidence that the households were

consenting, active or passive participants. But the absence of proof upon this point favours the conclusion that they were passive participants. True, in one instance, the gaoler and "all his house," at Phillippi, are mentioned as "believing in God;" but in the other recorded instances the Scriptures are silent upon this matter. The general absence of proof, in conjunction with the commission, favours the expansive principle. If it had been wrong to baptise passive and non-electing persons the Holy Spirit would have recorded it. If faith had been essential, no doubt it would have been clearly recorded. We may presume, therefore, that the households did contain some non-electing and passive members. We reason thus, because it would only be conformable to the commission to baptise the members of a family likely to be instructed in the Gospel. The commission is so comprehensive, and the latitude so wide, that every opportunity presenting a reasonable hope of abiding within the Christian kingdom should be seized for initiating therein. To wait for faith or heartfelt belief is to put aside the commission. By no casuistry can "all nations" be made to read "all believers." Nations are composed of men, women, and children. To baptise nations is to baptise men, women, and children. Now, as among infant children there is a natural incompetency to receive faith, so, if faith be required, children cannot be baptised, and the terms of the commission not acted upon.

That children are comprehended in nations is a self-evident proposition. And that our Lord contemplated their baptism seems probable from His words, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Unless these words are applied to some practical result they appear idle. As a word in idleness was never spoken by our Lord, we may take for granted they were intended to be practically applied. Though used, perhaps, primarily in reference to the guilelessness of children, as a lesson to men, yet, practically, how can men so well bring children to Christ but in and through an appointed rite.

That children and heathens present no obstacle from the absence of faith, is ascertained, not alone from the words of the commission, but a knowledge of the Gospel scheme carries to the same conclusion. By the Gospel none are excluded. All are invited to partake of the blessings which it offers. Under the Hebrew dispensation, God held alliance with a people separated out from the rest of mankind; but under the Christian dispensation, the middle wall of partition has been cast down. The Gentiles are now fellow-heirs with the Israel of God (Eph. iii. 6). They do not know it, but they have an interest in the Atonement. This is not conveyed by baptism. It is an inalienable right of all men—the free gift of God. If heathens are excluded from the outer or visible kingdom, it is by their non-acceptance of Christ. This may be from either ignorance or wilfulness. It is not by an act of God's policy they are excluded. Propriety suggests their exclusion while giving their homage to idols. But God by no legislative act excludes them. The great mystery hid, in other ages, from the sons of men is, "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs." If Gentiles are fellow-heirs, shall the children of believing parents be excluded? Heirship is supposed by divines to result from ritual baptism; but heirship, in its extended sense, embraces all mankind; in its particular or elect sense, includes those "led by the Spirit of God." Ritual baptism does not confer heirship.

The words of the commission which have been read to limit the administration of the rite to believers, we may conclude to be meant for all mankind, when we reflect upon what has been previously advanced, as showing that the rite does not baptise into Christ. An error of much moment can scarcely be committed from baptising "in the name of;" for, though a recipient may relapse into heathenism, yet, as good and bad will be mingled in the nominal kingdom, and ritual baptism does not relieve from this position, so an apostatized Christian is not very much worse than a mere nominal Christian. The essential difference

is, that one is removed farther from instruction than the other. The remotest chance of an initiated continuing to profess Christianity, should be enough to justify the administration of the rite. That baptism was administered in early times with but indifferent expectations of a faithful continuance, is evidenced by the fact that whole nations in the east and south apostatized.

Moreover, when we consider that water baptism does not cleanse from sin, we are further convinced that it is but an initiatory rite to bring within the influence of Gospel teaching. If it baptise not into Christ; if it cleanse not from sin; and if it be not an agent to convey the new birth, we may learn that faith is not essential to its validity. Moreover, when we perceive that salvation does not depend upon it, we find a further argument in the same direction.

As salvation is made by churchmen to depend on baptism, it follows as a sequence that faith should accompany the rite. This is a necessary condition. For as faith is so repeatedly held up in the Scriptures as entitling to salvation, so it is consistently concluded that baptism without faith is of none effect.

But there is salvation to those who, in this world, have not faith. From the blindness of their heart, they may not here see God, and may deny Him; but when that blindness is removed, they will see God, "for every eye shall see Him." To deny Him then will be impossible. Though such have not here salvation, hereafter they will discover the riches of the redeeming love of Christ. We have already hinted at our consciousness of the declaration of our Lord, "he that believeth not shall be damned." This seems at utter variance with universal redemption. But when explained, it will be found not to be.

When we reflect upon the spiritual kingdom, the thoughts suggested lead us to the conclusion that spiritual life has its origin and abiding nature in God independent of material rites. If any be instituted, they rise to the mind as being only mediums of communicating to spirits knowledge which the gross carnal

character of man's mixed condition is incapable in any other manner of receiving. The Gospel scheme is in strict accordance with these suggestions. Dr. Magee has discovered this;* but he applied the knowledge to a different object from what I do. He wrote against deniers of revealed religion; I am writing against perverters of it. The enlighted mind rises to the conception that "circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing," but a new creature is required, "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." This is tantamount to declaring that baptism or unbaptism availeth nothing; circumcision or uncircumcision being equivalent terms.† Spiritual existence, or spiritual salvation, depends on spiritual agency. The Gospel accords with these views. Though Christ appointed two ordinances to aid man in this his time state, that he may be brought within the influence of a teaching that shall draw him into closer union with his Maker, yet they by no means comprise the bonds which unite. The bonds are wholly spiritual in this world and in the next. Salvation, then, is not a result of an accomplished rite, but wholly the effect of spiritual influence. This is partially discovered by some divines, but yet very partially and very imperfectly. The theology which gave rise to the sentiments expressed below, though it rises above the dogmatic teaching of formalist salvation, is, nevertheless, very defective.‡

* "For the closeness of the analogy between the works of nature and the word of the Gospel being found to be such, that every blow which is aimed at the one rebounds with undiminished force against the other, the conviction of their common origin must be the inference of unbiassed understanding."—*Magee on the Atonement*, page 3.

† The sacrifices of the law, then, being preparatory to that of Christ—*the law itself being but a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*—the sacred writers in the *New Testament* naturally adopt the sacrificial terms of the ceremonial service; and by their reference to the use of them, as employed under the law, clearly point out the sense in which they are to be understood in their application under the Gospel."—*Magee's Atonement*, page 41.

‡ "Adults are saved by faith, not from the virtue of faith; but it is of

A knowledge of the Gospel scheme leads to the conclusion that faith is not essential to give validity to ritual baptism. The Gospel, in few words, is, "Christ died for all men," not as Carson writes "for His chosen," or, as Churchmen think, for the faithful baptized. Paul's words are, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have *all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself *a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time." This great truth, hid from mankind through past ages, has been only within recent times attested by a few men. The time has arisen when this great truth may be safely presented to view. Now shall be recognized that God in truth "is no respecter of persons." It will be found that He is the Saviour, not only of the baptised "in the name of the Lord Jesus," but He is the Saviour of all men, Jews and Gentiles, baptised or unbaptised. He is the Saviour of Greek and Roman Christians, of Protestants of every hue, of Mahomedans, of Pagans, of good and bad of every kind. Christ died

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faith, that it might be by grace. Infants who enter heaven must be regenerated, but not by the Gospel. Infants must be sanctified for heaven, but not through the truth as revealed to man. We know nothing of the means by which God receives infants, nor have we any business with it. The salvation that the Gospel proclaims to the world, is a salvation through the belief of the truth, and none have this salvation without faith. The nations who have not heard the Gospel, cannot be saved by the Gospel, because the Gospel is salvation only through faith in it. They are not condemned by the Gospel; for it is condemnation only to those who do not believe it. To them it is neither a benefit or an injury. They will be judged, as we are assured in the Scriptures, according to the law written in their hearts."—*Carson*, page 173.

"Such a covenant cannot save an infant who believes nothing. But there is a covenant in which they are included, and which will save as many of them as are included in it—the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son, in which He engaged to lay down His life as a ransom for His chosen, whether infants or adults."—*Ibid*, page 216.

"to draw all men unto Him." God assumed humanity to give life unto all. To some is given life here; to all hereafter. He giveth life not alone to the elect or His chosen, but "unto the world" (John vi. 33 and 51). Redemption is not in and through baptism, but in and through Christ the living God, irrespective of baptism.

This is the Gospel, or good news to men, and it is to be preached to every creature: "Go ye, teach all nations." The prophetic writings proclaim that ages would be consumed in conveying to all nations the glorious truth. Nevertheless, though ignorant of it, they have an interest in it; and no sooner is it proclaimed to a nation, and gladly received, than that nation is eligible for the rite of baptism. The kingdom which does receive the Gospel becomes, in a more intimate sense than before, a kingdom of our Lord's. By this process it is "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). Being brought to a knowledge of Christ, and of His righteous laws, men are tried by the law of righteousness; being yet in heathenism, they are tried "out of the books"* which give laws to the several heathen kingdoms (Acts xvii.; Rev. xx. 12; Rom. ii. 1—16): that is to say, the consciences of all will be the measure of approval or of condemnation.

These present the grand leading features of God's government on earth.

Divines, ignorant of this extended relation of God to all men, have argued within a narrow circle, from which has been excluded the Pagan nations. Not that heathens have been wholly cast aside as having no relation to God, but in the divine scheme of redemption they have been held to have no interest until by faith and baptism they have been gathered within the circle. Hence false views have obtained upon the subject of baptism.

* See "True Church" for explanation of this portion of Scripture.

Under the limited view taken of the Atonement, Anabaptists thwart God's merciful project to bless all nations. Acting upon a scheme to admit, to the best of their judgment, only faithful Christians, they oppose the extension of the kingdom of Christ.

Under a similar limited view Churchmen demand a proxy faith, and engagements to be contracted impossible to be fulfilled.

This latter state of things arises from mistaking the character of the new covenant. Church divines suppose, that to be comprehended in the new covenant it is needful to enter into a compact with God, "to resist the devil and all his works, the sinful lusts of the flesh, and the pomps and vanities of this wicked world." This is a great mistake. The covenant is not between man and his Maker, but between God and Christ. The covenant between man and his Maker was the covenant under the law, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Former covenants were between man and God: God commanding and promising, and man bound to perform. The Abrahamic covenant required on man's part circumcision (Gen. xvii. 13, 14); the Mosaic, the fulfilment of the law (Deut. iv. 13). The latter, which arose out of, or in connection with, the former, and became the Hebrew dispensation, was imperfect. It was imperfect, inasmuch as it was restricted to a few; it was imperfect, inasmuch as man could not fulfil the conditions; it was imperfect, inasmuch as it was to be done away with; and it was imperfect, as being only a type. The two covenants, the Abrahamic and the Mosaic, were shadows or precursors of a covenant in all things perfect. The former covenants were imperfect as concerning man's capability of fulfilment. On God's part they were perfect, and were ultimately perfected in Him by His Son. He fulfilled all righteousness by the circumcision of His human nature, and by the literal observance of God's righteous laws. Thus was the everlasting covenant with Abraham fulfilled: the spiritual Abraham fulfilling all the

conditions required of men, and so in Him all nations are blessed.

The fulfilment of the law by the spiritual Abraham created a new covenant, and displaced the old (Heb. viii. 13). Christ, by the sacrifice of Himself, put away sin (Heb. ix. 26). By this the last covenant is a covenant of grace (Rom. v. 21). The first, or Mosaic covenant, was a covenant under the law; the last, or Christian covenant, is a covenant of grace, by which we are redeemed from the curse of the law, and are no longer subject to its bondage. The strength of sin is the law, and the law being fulfilled, the body of sin is destroyed (Rom. iv., v., vi., vii.).

The last covenant is between God and Christ, and it is a perfect covenant (Heb. viii.). It is perfect in that it has regard to all men; it is perfect in that it hath redeemed from the curse; it is perfect in that it puts away sin; it is perfect in that it is complete and final; it is perfect in that it is the antitype or fulfilment of the former or typical covenants.

To enter into another covenant which professes to fulfil the law, is to put aside the work of the Saviour, and to bring men back again under the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 10). It is undertaking to do that which God has pronounced men incapable of doing: it is returning back into a state of pupillage. The first covenants were to bring men to the knowledge of God. The law was the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Having been brought to Him, men seek to return. To return is to retrograde from manhood to childhood. Return to the old covenant men cannot, but by retrogression men establish a covenant of their own. They erect a worldly sanctuary, and cast down, in imbecile thought, the sanctuary "not made with hands." They displace, in their minds, the true tabernacle which God hath pitched, and put up a tabernacle which man pitches (Heb. viii. 9, 10). They repudiate the perfect, and attempt to establish an imperfect covenant.

Divines write much about prevenient grace, and conditional

grace, and right intention; but be it known to all men, that the perfect covenant is not affected by any or all the incidents raised by false theological reasonings. In Christ shall all be made alive. Some now; some hereafter. For this, let all men love God, and so fulfil the law. Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. xiii. 10).

The perfect covenant, as it comprehends all men, so it requires all men to enter into the kingdom thereof. It requires that all men be taught the Gospel. It requires that no obstacle be opposed to admission into Christ's kingdom but what propriety may suggest. In determining whether faith be essential to ritual baptism, it is important to consider that if it be the purposes of God could not be established. The unity in God's kingdom would be disturbed. The prophecies are clear that Christ's kingdom is to extend itself over the whole earth. They are equally clear that to the end of time there will be good and bad, believers and unbelievers, in Christ's nominal or outer kingdom. As ritual baptism admits to the kingdom of mixed good and bad, if faithful believers only are admitted, how are unbelievers to find admission? If believer baptism were adhered to as practised consistently, the nominal kingdom must necessarily be limited to the believer baptised. And how will thus be executed the commission to baptise all nations? As the Scriptures plainly declare Christ died for all men, why should some erect a standard to exclude others? The Scriptures are opposed to such narrow views. There cannot be a doubt that "all who gladly receive the word" may be baptised. And when a reasonable hope presents itself that children will be brought up and nurtured in a knowledge of Christ's righteous laws, they may be baptised. Children of Christian or of ethnic parents are, in one respect, on a footing. The title in one is as good as in the other. The title is their common humanity. The purposes of God, as revealed, show that faith is not essential to the due reception of the rite of baptism.

THE INTENTION OF WATER BAPTISM.

In presuming to inquire into the intention of our Lord, by the institution of the baptismal rite, I do so with great humility. I do not inquire into it expecting to arrive at a positive conclusion. I seek only to learn the probable intention. And I do so with the view to be guided into correct thoughts upon baptism, that we may learn the true principles to guide us in administering the rite. I do not presume to scan the full design. This would lead us out of our depth. Its design, as representing emblematically a cleansed nature, which presents itself primarily, I do not touch upon. The beauty and harmony which is devised to connect the visible with the invisible kingdom form no part in our present inquiry. The purpose is to ascertain what is the intention as regards the practical result. We are not now concerned with the simplicity and beauty that reign in the devices symbolically to convey deep spiritual meanings. These are not alone to be found in connection with baptism, as every Christian knows, they pervade the divine economy. On this subject I am silent. It does not fall within the scope of my design; and if it did, I fear I am not fitted to such a task. I limit the inquiry to the practical object sought to be attained by the institution of the rite.

The intention, Anabaptists believe, is to afford the means for an outward and visible demonstration of faith. They view the command to baptize in connection with the commission to teach; and they think that those only taught are fit subjects for baptism; and they believe it instituted to afford the means for manifesting faith in the truths taught. In the words of one of their writers, "Baptism is an exhibition of the faith of the Gospel; and, of course, cannot belong to any but those who appear to believe the Gospel."* They think it instituted as a trial of man's obedience, and a badge of true discipleship.

* Carson, p. 198.

Churchmen, on the other hand, view it as instituted to be the medium of a compact between God and man, whereby a covenant relationship is established, conveying to men the benefits of the Atonement when obedience on man's part to the supposed compact is observed. In furtherance of this, they require a vow on the part of every candidate which must be pronounced in person or by proxy.

Both believe, as we have seen, that the rite baptises into Christ, and, therefore, to be intended as a means of incorporation with Christ. We have shown the error of this opinion.

In dealing with the two classes of opinions, let us first apply ourselves to the opinions promulgated by Anabaptists, that the intention is, the setting up a standard as a trial of faith, and as offering a means of exhibiting before men acceptance of the Gospel.

Are there any Scripture declarations which lead to these conclusions ? There are the statements in connection with the apostolic baptisms, shewing that faith was generally demanded, but this fact does not amount to a declaration that baptism was instituted to test the faith. And, if the Gospel teaching is opposed to such a declaration, then we may be certain, in the absence of direct proof, that the negative is assured by the opposite affirmative. Now there are affirmations which declare the marks whereby discipleship shall be known ; and among them baptism is not found. In this we have a full assurance that baptism is not appointed as a test of true discipleship.

God knows the disciples of Christ without any external mark ; God knoweth His own, and is known of them. Men are to know them, not by baptism, but "by their fruits" (Matt. vii.). Our Lord expressly declared "By their fruits ye shall know them." Again, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35). Again, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John xv. 8). Again, "If ye continue in my word,

then are ye my disciples indeed" (John viii. 13). Again, our Lord declared that they are united to Him who do God's will; and God's will we learn to be, to "Cease to do evil, and to learn to do well;" and "to do unto others as we wish they should do unto us."

This teaching pervades the Scriptures. True discipleship is known by the character it bears, and not exhibited by the acceptance of a rite. We are justified, then, in declaring that baptism is not instituted as a trial of faith, or as a mark or badge of true discipleship. In no instance is it declared to be appointed for such purpose; and the teaching throughout the Scriptures is opposed thereto.

That it is appointed as a mark or badge of external discipleship or nominal union with Christ, must of course be admitted. For as the commission is to baptise into "the name of," so all baptised persons are nominally, or in name, allied to Christ. It is the appointed means of external union.

Having arrived at a conclusion, with reference to the opinion of Anabaptists, let us now consider the views of Churchmen concerning the intention of, or the immediate end sought by, the institution of baptism.

Churchmen believe baptism the appointed agent of regeneration. They think it, when efficiently performed, the medium through which the Holy Ghost operates; and that the joint baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost is the ordained way to eternal life.* They think it is provided for the mystical washing away of sin, by which man's corrupt nature is cleansed, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost a new nature given.† They think, to attain these ends, a compact is required, in which men have to vow and to observe faith and obedience.‡

* Address and Exhortation, Baptismal Service.

† Prayer, Baptismal Service.

‡ Baptismal Service.

From this statement may be gathered the opinions Churchmen have of Christ's intention for the institution of the baptismal rite. They think it appointed to be the medium of a covenant between God and man, whereby, if observed on man's part with faith and obedience, a title to heaven is given. We shall not enter now upon a formal refutation of this opinion. We have partially shown its fallacy in the remarks on Christ's universal propitiatory sacrifice.

Nor do we oppose wholly every conclusion. We may not deny that the Holy Ghost operates sometimes upon men at the time of receiving ritual baptism. We are far from thinking it wrong to pray for such influence at such time. We may not deny that man's corrupt nature is changed through repentance and faith; and if ritual baptism be received, urged thereto by repentance and faith, it becomes an earnest and an assurance of God's favour. The words of Christ give this assurance, "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved." Baptism becomes, under these circumstances, a pledge of God's favour, and the assurance of remitted sins. Not that it is appointed for such purpose. But as an instituted symbol of cleansing, the performance of baptism lives in the remembrance as an act of faith done.

But here we stop. We follow no farther in company with the sentiments which ascribe to ritual baptism a sacramental efficacy, and which deny to the unbaptised an interest in the Atonement. Eternal life and ultimate redemption from sin are inalienable birthrights of all men. The opinion, founded upon the declaration, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," that redemption is obtained only through water baptism, we deny. We shall subsequently show that this is not the meaning of our Lord's words. If this meaning can be assigned them, they are at utter variance with the many other scriptural declarations we have before presented to notice.

Churchmen think the rite instituted as a sign or symbol of a compact; and they express it as "the outward and visible sign of

an inward and spiritual grace." Connecting with the ordinance the promises of Christ (which, as we have shown, were given for other purposes), and knowing that these promises are dependent upon faith and obedience, they require a compact to be entered into, either directly or indirectly, that "the devil and all his works shall be resisted," and that the candidate shall be "Christ's faithful soldier and servant;" and under this compact they think the baptised have received with the rite a baptism of the Holy Ghost, which flows as a necessary consequence of sacramental appointment. They thus conceive that it is an appointed ordinance whereby a compact is established.

We have already put forth our views of the new and perfect covenant, and have shown that it embraces all mankind, and that it is not confined within the circumscribed limits of ritual baptism. We have shown that the perfect covenant is not affected by the incidents pertaining to a ceremonial command.

We have shown that sin is not cleansed by water baptism.

We have shown that salvation is not dependent on it.

We have shown that true union with Christ is independent of it.

We have shown that true discipleship is not to be known by it.

If none of these things are the result, or the immediate consequences of the rite, how can it be said to be the "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace?"

It is declared to be the means whereby "men born in sin are born anew in righteousness, and are made heirs and joint heirs with Christ." But the fallacy of this opinion has been fully shown. Not the whole body of the ritually baptised, but they only led by the Spirit of God, are born anew in righteousness, and are made heirs and joint heirs with Christ.

Baptism was not appointed as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, nor was it appointed to be the medium of true union with Christ. For what, then, is it probable, was it instituted?

Under the Hebrew dispensation, the corresponding type of circumcision was an institution whereby an external relationship with God was manifested. It did not constitute true union. It created a covenant relationship, which required, on the part of the Hebrews, fulfilment of the law. In this respect it differed from the antitype. The antitype does not require fulfilment of the law, the requirements of the law being satisfied in Christ. In another respect they differ. They differ in their symbolical language. The one signifying something to be done; the other that the something is done. The one signifying that man's nature had to be cleansed; the other that man's nature is cleansed. The perfect covenant thus supplanted the imperfect covenant. In two respects the type and the antitype differ, but in a main feature they resemble each other. The one admitted, the other admits to, external relationship with God. Both convey privileges. But neither the one conveyed, nor does the other convey, grace. Both have been set up as means of external relationship. And the latter as a means whereby the nations of this world may be gathered into Christ's kingdom, and thus an external relationship with God established.

By this external relationship a depository is found for God's written Word. The Jews of old carefully guarded the sacred writings; so the nations gathered in under the Christian dispensation carefully guard God's written Word.

Other advantages flow from establishing a nominal union. It brings all the members within the influence of the Word, and being instructed in righteousness, many are renewed in knowledge after the image of Christ.

The prophecies concerning the kingdom point to the conclusion, that the rite was instituted to effect external relationship. By ritual baptism are some of the prophecies fulfilled. It is by baptism the heathen nations part with their several distinctive names and become Christian nations — that is, nominally Christian nations: Pagan rule being put down, and Christian rule esta-

blished. By this process it is "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." It is not intended that the kingdoms of this world shall become kingdoms of our Lord in a higher sense. Not that they will not be greatly advanced by external relationship. But as kingdoms, taken as wholes, they will not be in intimate union. The prophecies are clear, that good and bad, the tares and wheat, shall mingle and continue to the end of this dispensation. They are just as clear that every kingdom shall be in nominal union. The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. A knowledge of the Lord shall be universal. The kingdom shall be preached in all the earth as a witness, and then shall the end come, and not before. The prophecies are clear that every kingdom will be gathered into Christ's kingdom in nominal, but not in perfect union. Some members in each in true, but the many in nominal union only. An external relationship all nations ultimately shall bear, and be called Christians; and this is effected by preaching the Gospel, and sealed by ritual baptism.

The prophecies, we perceive, run in parallel and harmonious direction with the commission. All nations are to be gathered in, and the commission is "to baptise all nations." The nations are to be nominally allied, and the commission is to baptise all nations "in the name of" Christ.

With regard to a covenant relationship, be it observed, that the Apostolic narratives afford no instance of covenant engagement. Of the three thousand baptised we read, "They that gladly received the words of Peter were baptized." Of the baptism of the Eunuch, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptised him." Of the baptism of Lydia, of the Gaoler, of Saul, of the Samaritans, we find uniformly a similar simple statement. Simply he or they were baptised. No vow, no godfathers and godmothers; simply and only "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." And what do we gather from this absence of covenant engagement? Plainly, that no

engagement is needed. Plainly, that the covenant is complete in Christ, and is not to be marred by man's imbecility and wickedness.

The institution of baptism is not, then, to afford the medium of a compact between God and men. Nor is it, as we have shown, appointed for the exhibition of faith. It is appointed, probably, as an outward and visible sign of external relationship. The intention being, probably, to gather the kingdoms of this world into nominal union with Christ, whereby "His way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations."

EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

JUDGED by the standard set up by the Clergy Church, it will be conceived that we have written disparagingly of ritual baptism. Nevertheless, we are far from thinking lightly of it. Water baptism, though not conveying what Churchmen believe, is yet a most important ceremonial. To be born of water, though not identical with being born of the Spirit, conveys great privileges. The blessings which follow the due administration of baptism may be, and no doubt often are, very great. A ceremonial act carries with it a blessing when it proceeds from love. And an act performed from a sense of duty to God's command may expect a blessing. Beyond the privileges and blessings which may accompany baptism, it is a most important ceremonial, as a means to gather within the circle of the Gospel influence the heathen nations.

But that it should be performed after a right manner, and in due accordance with God's scheme, are also very important. As an offering of man, in obedience to God's commands, it is essential that it should be made out of a pure heart. A punctilious observance in the letter of a commanded rite God does not demand. But He does require that it should be observed in accordance with His own Divine scheme. And that not as a rigid

Exactor, but because a departure from His scheme usually proceeds from, and leads to, evil.

This is exemplified in the history of Cain and Abel. God had respect unto Abel's offering, because it was in accordance with God's pre-arranged scheme for man's redemption. And He had respect unto it, because it typified the offering without blemish. God had not respect unto Cain's offering, because it was in opposition to God's scheme. And He had not respect unto it, because it typified man's carnal nature at enmity with God. It was of the fruit of the ground, from whence man's carnal nature was taken, and God had not respect unto such offering. But God did not visit the offering with punishment, though He had not respect unto it. "Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wrath? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." It depended on the after conduct whether Cain should be accepted. God gave to him, as the elder brother, rule over Abel. God did not deprive Cain of his birthright. He did not punish him in any way for his offering. But God foresaw that it would lead to evil. The carnal heart evidenced itself in that it was wroth. The offering was a carnal offering, out of a carnal heart, and a natural curse followed. God did not curse, but a curse followed as the effect of a cause. The carnal heart envied, and hated, and slew; and the blood of the murdered one cried from the ground unto God, and Cain was "cursed from *the earth.*"

All the evil flowed from a natural law. To teach us to depart from evil, and to follow after that which is good, God has established a scheme. And as this scheme is founded in God's wisdom, any departure therefrom brings with it its own punishment: so important is it to follow out God's scheme. God's scheme is the Gospel scheme. Now, the Gospel scheme comprehends the spiritual perfection of man's nature (Ezek. xliii. 12).

Any ordinances, as those under the Hebrew, or the more simple ones under the Christian dispensation, are but tools, so to speak, by which to work out the result. By mistaking the tools for the work done, the pattern exhibited by God is miserably imitated (Ezek. xliii. 9—12). The consequences have been—spiritual harlotry, kingdoms established by Christianity opposed to Christianity, deadly strifes, bickerings, contentions, confusion, brother's arm, as with Cain, raised against brother, and Christian brotherhood a by-word. The offerings of nominal Christians have been of the fruit of the ground. They have taken their rise in carnal conceptions.

Not that men have made offerings without reference to spiritual things, or that they have not spiritualised their offerings. Just the reverse. Their own carnal things they have spiritualised, as did Cain, and here is the fault. Throughout heathen Christendom, in all the past, superstition and fanaticism have ascribed a spirituality to many carnal and mechanical acts. But, passing these by, and limiting our vision to what are called reformed Churches, in which we, as Protestants, are more immediately concerned, we here still discover that mechanical acts are raised into spiritual operations. Among them is ritual baptism, an ordinance appointed as a means of external union; but men, not contented with this arrangement of God, raise it into a means of internal or true vital union. They thus offend, as is predicted by the prophet Ezekiel, by casting down the wall raised between God and man, and by setting their thresholds by God's thresholds, their posts by God's posts, and by these abominations defile God's holy name. (Ezek. xliii. 8.)

Churchmen, who derive their principles from a corrupted heathen Christianity, claim powers not granted them. Their divines presume to sit in God's seat, and pretend to possess a delegated power never granted. They arrogate to themselves dealings with God's Holy Spirit. By a misconception of God's promises, they cast down God's scheme and erect their own.

By this, in baptising, they exceed the commission. Instead of limiting the ritual to a baptism in the name of God, they presume to assert that a recipient has been baptised into God by the Holy Ghost. As an offering unto God, it is of the fruit of the ground. Their carnal notions have raised a mechanical into a spiritual act. They thus confound things intended to be kept separate. They mingle with God's holy and righteous kingdom their carnal offerings. Out of this arises much of the evil, and all the confusion, that has reigned throughout Christendom.

A misunderstanding of our Lord's words to Nicodemus has contributed to this state of things. The declaration that "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," has been held to mean that a new birth of water and of the Holy Ghost is essential to salvation. Starting from this false position, and maintaining the doctrine of sacramental grace through deputed agents, it has been held that a baptism of the Holy Ghost accompanies a baptism of water. Founded upon the declaration of our Lord, and coupling with it certain promises to the faithful, it is held that the Holy Ghost baptises when man baptises.

In all this is much error. Arising partly from inability to apprehend spiritual things, partly from the corrupt affections of men, and partly from false interpretation of God's Word. With the latter we have now to deal in reference to Christ's words: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." What did our Lord mean by these words?

It will be observed that there are two declarations, "Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God," and "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God." The first declaration is, that unless a man is born again, truly born again of the Spirit, renewed after the image of God in righteousness, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God. And then follows the declaration that "Except a man be

born of water," as one kind of birth, "and of the Spirit," as another kind of birth, "he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God." These expressions have been received as identical. But they are not identical. The two declarations have not like meanings.

The declarations, so astonishing to Nicodemus, our Lord proceeded partly to explain. He explained the first declaration, "Ye must be born again." The latter, involving the birth by water, He did not explain. It was predictive. It had reference to the kingdom Christ came to establish.

With regard to the first, Christ hinted that it was somewhat different to the second. He proceeded to make a marked distinction between being born of the Spirit and being born of water. In the explanation afforded, He marks the distinction with this significant hint, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." Marking in these words the distinction between the fleshly and the spiritual kingdoms, He proceeds to explain the words uttered in the first declaration, "Ye must be born again." "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." In these words our Lord declared what it was to be truly born again. It was to be operated upon in an unseen manner by God's Spirit. To be truly born again, our Lord taught, is to be born of the Spirit. In this explanation, beyond the words which mark the distinction between the fleshly and the spiritual kingdoms, no comment is made upon the latter declaration. It had reference to a future, and could not be well explained at that time. Nor, indeed, did it comport with Christ's plan then to explain it. He ever spoke in parables and hidden speech. The concealed meanings being intended for a future, when they could be borne and be understood with advantage.

The latter declaration is put in, as it were, by parenthesis. Beyond the allusion to the difference between the fleshly and the

spiritual kingdoms, no further notice by our Lord is taken of it. The fleshly and the spiritual are drawn in striking contrast, and here this portion of the subject drops. This passing notice, so far from leading to a right understanding of our Lord's meaning, has been misconstrued, and men perverted it to signify the difference between the human and the ecclesiastical, the latter being styled spiritual. Pretending that the spiritual was represented by pseudo-descendants of the apostles, and that a stream of new vitality flowed therein, the line of separation between the fleshly and the spiritual was drawn, as existing in acts done by, and things connected with, ecclesiastics.

This false interpretation has had its day. Our Lord did not intend a meaning so adverse to His true kingdom.

In the councils of God it had been predetermined to institute the rite not yet promulgated when the declarations were uttered. The baptism unto repentance of John was being administered, but Christ had not instituted the Christian rite. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, but not established. To establish the kingdom, that is, the nominal or outer kingdom, the rite was to be the sign of membership. In anticipation of this, our Lord declared, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God." Christ here uses the term kingdom of God as afterwards it was used in the parables. It had a two-fold meaning. It referred to the nominal or outer, as well as to the true or inner kingdoms. And Jesus declared, that unless a man were born of water, he could not *enter into* the outer kingdom; and unless he were born of the Spirit, he could not *enter into* the inner kingdom.

No doubt this meaning is not found at the surface. Neither were our Lord's meanings in most of His sayings. They were not intended to be transparent. Consequently, false interpretations have been put upon them; and, in the past, with advantage in the whole most likely. The meaning assigned by divines to this saying was, as is plain from the wording of the baptismal

service, that none could enter heaven or be saved unless regenerate, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost. Whereas this is not the meaning. The meaning is, that no man can enter into the outer kingdom without being born of water, neither into the inner without being born of the Spirit. By employing the term kingdom in a two-fold sense, Jesus uttered two truths independent of each other, but which, to the minds of men for a time, would appear indissolubly connected, and to refer to the hereafter state.

It will be seen that the language in the two declarations, with great ingenuity, precision, and wisdom, vary. Our Lord first declares, "Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God." Nicodemus questioning Him upon this, Jesus alters the phraseology, and adds, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God."

What was the purpose served by altering the phraseology? It will be found on examination that there is a purpose.

If the words in italics are transposed, the meaning will be found to be different. The explanation given of the latter declaration would not hold if our Lord had said, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God, in its one sense nominal, does not need a baptism of outside beholders to become visible to them. A man need not be born of water to see and apprehend the nominal kingdom. Every instructed and well-informed pagan can declare the boundary line. If asked, he would say without hesitation, the baptised in the name of Christ compose the Christian kingdom. The sense we have put upon the latter declaration could not be, if the word see had been used. The sense we perceive to be varied by employing the words "enter into," instead of, as in the first declaration, "see" the kingdom of God.

Now, transpose the latter to the former, and let it stand, Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, and the meaning would not be precisely what our Lord's words convey.

In the first instance, He is not speaking of the kingdom in a twofold sense; and this is apparent from the explanation given by Jesus. The being born again, in the sense first intended, is to be "born of the Spirit." Consequently, it must have referred wholly to the true spiritual kingdom.

And further, He was not speaking of the true kingdom above, but of the true kingdom on earth. Jesus said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

The expression had reference to the true kingdom on earth, and had our Lord used the words "enter into," the declaration would have been true, but would not have conveyed what our Lord intended. He had been testifying of this kingdom, and Nicodemus would not receive His testimony, and the explanation of our Lord's meaning is afforded by this. Nicodemus could not see the force of the testimony, because he was not born of the Spirit. Our Lord, by the first declaration, alluded to the blindness of man's natural vision. The declaration had reference to this. He uttered a similar declaration at another time, when He said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Men made pure by the influence of God's Spirit have the mental vision brightened, and they see God in His ways, and perceive His spiritual kingdom on earth. This was the meaning conveyed in the first declaration; but this would not have been the meaning had the words "enter into" been used.

We perceive, then, that a transposition would convey meanings different from what the declarations convey as the words stand.

Through this nice choice of words are discovered the meanings which our Lord intended. By studying the expressions with a knowledge of the Gospel, we arrive at the true meanings intended. We perceive by this delicate adaptation of words, that the two declarations are not identical or synonymous.

From this explanation is gathered that our Lord did not declare, what is usually supposed, that water and Spirit baptisms

are needful to salvation. Our Lord, in the declarations about the kingdom of God, was speaking of the two states of the earthly kingdom, and did not refer to the kingdom above. Salvation was not concerned. He told Nicodemus of "earthly things," and not of "heavenly things."

Though to be born of water is not essential to salvation, yet if it be preached, and it can be had, a great obligation is imposed to receive it. The rite is instituted for a great purpose, no less than as an agent to assist in the subjugation of the kingdoms of this world. To be born of water, gives the badge or marks of God's kingdom as opposed to the kingdoms of the world. It brings within the influence of God's kingdom and of God's Word. It assists in awakening to a knowledge of our high destinies.

To be born of water suggests the idea of regeneration. But to be born of water is not, as we have shown, to be born anew in righteousness. It is not to have a changed nature. It is not to be born anew in Christ. It is not to be changed from the similitude of the first, into the similitude of the second Adam. It is not to have the old man put off, and the old man put on, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of God. Yet it is a new birth. It is a new birth, out of heathenism into Christianity. It is a new birth, out of darkness into the marvellous light within God's kingdom. It is a new birth by which men enter into the outer kingdom of God. The term born again, in reference to water, is used figuratively, as the word baptism is so often used, and denotes a change out of a previous state.

Though not necessary to salvation, God has made it needful to the advancement of His earthly kingdom. In the past, the right doctrine concerning this birth has been veiled and mysteriously commingled with the doctrine of the vital new birth, so that the one has been made to appear the representative of the other. They have been held in close embrace. While men attached a saving efficacy to the rite, it was useful to shroud "the doctrine

of baptisms." Men are now becoming daily better acquainted with God, with themselves, with their high destinies, even while yet on earth; and a greater amount of light can be advantageously admitted.*

CONCLUSION.

Let us now take a rapid review of the subject matter, and in a few remarks show, in a condensed form, the course of argument.

We have taken as the basis, that the doctrine of baptisms has not been heretofore understood. This is evident, in that the subject throughout the past has been fruitful of controversy; and it is evident in the diversified and opposite opinions which have obtained about baptism. Wherever Christianity has exhibited any life, "the doctrine of baptisms" has presented itself for renewed discussion. Only during the comatose state of Christendom, when the strong arm of successful domination superinduced a lethargic indifference to doctrine, did the subject of baptism repose, and then in the acquiescence of a false theology. From the repeated agitation of this subject, and on other grounds, the inference is drawn that baptism has not been understood. It is only when a matter is clearly established to the common sense of mankind that it reposes in the conclusions to which the general assent has carried it.

The great error of the past has consisted in mistaking the

* Mankind for a long period were unfitted to receive the naked truths of the Gospel. We have said before, that if Baptism had been viewed as a simple initiatory rite, the outer kingdom in all probability would not have advanced. Another reason unfitted the dark past for the Gospel. A relentless malevolence would not permit its appearance. It is a striking fact that during the first three centuries, when Christianity preserved somewhat of its pure character, persecution against it reigned with little intermission. As soon as it was made to conform in outward appearance, suited to the low and carnal notions of mankind, persecution ceased. It revived again whenever the light attempted to pierce the dark gloom. Probably for the sake of peace, and to permit its outward progress, a misinterpretation was provided for and permitted.

character of the new covenant. It has not been perceived that the Christian covenant is wholly a covenant of grace, and a perfect covenant. Men, not perceiving this, established a state of things upon the basis of an imaginary covenant. Thinking that a covenant demanded an engagement on their parts, they created a covenant, the terms of which they vow to fulfil on their parts. Instead of accepting the declaration of Paul, that Christ "had abolished in His flesh the enmity even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," they set up an order of things which demands the fulfilment of a law contained in ordinances. Instead of accepting the declaration, that "the handwriting of ordinances was blotted out," they denied it, and established for themselves a handwriting. Instead of accepting the declaration, that Christ died for all men, they virtually oppose it, and declare that Christ died only for the faithful baptised. In the covenant which they attempt to establish are self-imposed conditions impossible to be fulfilled. By this a retrograde step is taken, which seeks the removal of the covenant of grace, and to replace it by a covenant of law contained in ordinances. The Atonement is thus in principle set aside, and Christ thereby crucified afresh.

The declaration involved in their covenant that ritual baptism is needful to salvation and to eternal life is unfounded. Contrary to the popular belief, we assert that it is not ritual baptism which doth save. It is God's love, acted out through the atoning blood of Christ, which saves. And this, not for the few, but for the many. God's love is shed on all, and the atonement is efficacious for all. For some here while yet on earth, for all hereafter. The some are God's elect, acted upon by the Spirit of God, whereby they cry "Abba, Father!" These, whether ritually baptised or not, experience on earth God's saving grace. They compose, here, His Church.* An assurance of peace is

* This declaration will be a stumbling block to many. It will be asked, Do some unbaptised persons compose the Church. The Church

breathed into their spirits, and they know and feel that they have communion with their God. Nothing can separate these from the love of God, "neither height nor depth, nor any other creature;" neither unreceived baptism nor unobserved ordinance of any kind can raise a barrier of separation between these and their God. He has created them, and He keeps them; He sustains them, be the colour of their skin what it may, and be their abode where it may. Herein is found the answer to the inquiry, Why do we find a noble-hearted pagan so often far superior to many a ritually baptised man called a Christian? The answer is, God is with His own, He knows them, and they know Him, whether ritually baptised or not. He dwells in their inmost being, and counsels them, and their nature is attuned in harmony. By the baptism of the One Spirit they are all baptised into the one body, and are created anew in the image of God's Son. God is with them, and fashioning them after the pattern humanity, though that humanity may not have been preached to them. God's Spirit silently, but powerfully, works within them, and all the nobler instincts of the spiritual mind are brought out into a living existence.

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is the Clergy, say some; the Church is a body of faithful men, Christians, say others. The Church we believe to be all united in spiritual union with their God, whether they may have heard of the intervention of the Son, the Redeemer, or not. And the promises apply to this body. If two or three of these meet and agree as touching anything they shall ask in Christ's name it shall be granted them. Of course those who have not heard of Christ, or who have not had proposed to them a faith in Him, would not meet in His name. But admitting the possibility of two or three faithful hearted in God meeting together and agreeing upon a petition, that petition must necessarily be of a legitimate character; to petition otherwise would be inconsistent in God's children, and their petition would be answered and affirmed. Our Lord's declaration confirms this view, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." Faith in God seeking a legitimate end shall never be disappointed.

This Gospel teaching is very different to clerical or ecclesiastical teaching. The body in union with God is very different to the heterogeneous body ecclesiastically allied. But then the makers are different! The one Maker makes His body after the similitude of a temple which reacheth unto the heavens; the clerical makers make theirs after the similitude of a temple based on, and confined to, earth: the one is a temple made without hands, the other is a temple made with hands. They have not perceived that the two simple rites instituted by Christ were ordained to be instruments for raising the machinery which may assist in building God's temple of men "renewed in knowledge." They have mistaken the instruments for the materials; their temple is thus built of ritually baptised persons. They have not perceived that the end and main object of the Gospel is "perfection," and not ritual baptism, as their scheme leads men to believe.

Ritual baptism is employed by God in His Christian kingdom as an instrument to bring men within the knowledge of the Gospel, whereby they may be renewed in knowledge. God, however, employs other instruments to instruct men, and which, until superseded, are effective, though in a minor degree. Any instruments which may be employed on earth, have for their object to renew men in knowledge. The end of all religion is "perfection." The means employed, under some suasions, are lamentably deficient, or seemingly adverse. The enemy sows tares even in the Gospel kingdom; and the kingdoms of the world are choked with rank and noxious weeds. Nevertheless, even in the latter Satan does not wholly rule. God is not alone the God of Christians; He is the God of mankind; and He ruleth over all, though all do not ackowledge His sovereignty. In conformity with these remarks, we find by our Saviour's teaching, that to fulfil the law and the prophets is to do unto every man what we wish they should do unto us. The supreme end of all teaching is love; "love is the fulfilling of the law;" love to God and love to man; and in whom this exists, in him God

dwells, whether such an one has been renewed in the spirit of his mind by one instrument or by another.

The popular belief among Christians is, that water baptism is needful to cleanse from sin, and that without its aid the Atonement is inefficacious.

We have attempted to show that man is subject to two laws—the law of sin in the members of the body, and the law of God. The former pertains to the flesh, the latter to the spirit, or the inner man. As the one or the other prevails, so are men in a state of non-acceptance or acceptance with God. The one operates to produce the carnal, the other the spiritual mind. The one is subject to the law of sin, the other is freed from the bondage of sin. These two states are not influenced directly by water baptism. The mortal body is subject to the law of sin, unless quickened by God's Spirit dwelling in it, and thus made alive in God, and freed from the law of sin.

Christ came on earth to put away, and to make an end of sin. The full fruition of this is not yet realized. It is partly accomplished here in those made alive by God's Spirit, and it will be fully accomplished hereafter in all made alive in Christ. Ritual baptism is not concerned with either the one state or the other. Whether ritually baptized or not, all having true communion with God by the Spirit of God dwelling within them, are freed from the law of sin, the spiritual mind subduing the carnal mind; all others are yet in their sins. Hereafter, when the mind can no longer be influenced by the law of sin in the members, the carnal mind will give way to the spiritual mind, and those who on earth are dead in trespasses and sins, shall then be made alive in Christ, and freed from the law of sin. Christ died for all men. He did not die for the godly; for none are righteous, no, not one, as self-made or originally created righteous; but Christ died for the ungodly. He died for all to make an end of sin.

The Scriptures recognise three baptisms—ritual baptism, Spirit baptism, and suffering baptism.

Ritual baptism baptises "in the name of," by which an external union is created, and men are born into the outer kingdom of God, and are called Christians.

Spirit baptism baptises with God, that is, into the humanity in God, and so incorporates with God.

Suffering baptism brings to God. It crucifies the old man, or carnal nature, and subdues it to the law of God in the inner man, whereby the carnal is changed into the spiritual.

These several baptisms may be each and all separate as to time and persons. They may not unite in the same person. Many a ritually baptised has never experienced Spirit or suffering baptism, and many a Spirit baptised has never experienced ritual baptism.

The "one baptism," declared by Paul to baptise into the one body, is not, as supposed by divines, ritual baptism. It is Spirit baptism. By this alone is true union with God effected. By this alone are men made heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. The commission to baptise is "in the name of;" Spirit baptism alone baptises into the humanity in God Christ Jesus our Lord. The members of His body are all baptised by the One Spirit into the One body. By this is its unity maintained. Ritual baptism has no power granted it to maintain unity in Christ.

The change out of the nature derived from the first Adam into the nature bestowed by the second Adam, is not produced by ritual baptism. It was not appointed for such purpose, that is, it was not appointed directly for such purpose. A rite whereby men are in name allied to God is not appointed, as supposed, to recreate or regenerate mankind. Though an agent or instrument to bring men within the Gospel teaching, and thereby renew men in knowledge after the image of God's Son, it is not the direct medium of communicating new life in Christ. It is not a sacramental agent whereby a new birth of the Spirit is given. It is contrary to Scripture to allege that when men baptise, the Holy Ghost baptises by sacramental appointment, whereby men are justified in declaring that baptised persons are baptised "with

water and with the Holy Ghost." The New Testament narratives show that a baptism of water and a baptism of the Holy Ghost are separate and independent baptisms. It is not proper to apply the promises of Christ to any institution for which they were not intended.

Regeneration is a result of union or incorporation with Christ, and ritual baptism is not appointed to incorporate with Christ. Men are commissioned only to baptise "in *the name* of the Lord Jesus." The past has been fruitful of evil from men presuming to claim a power to baptise into Christ. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, and if water baptises into Christ Jesus, then is there no condemnation to the ritually baptised. None will be hardy enough to assert that ritual baptism releases from all condemnation.

As ritual baptism does not incorporate with Christ, and as it is not the appointed means, *per se*, to wash away sin, so belief is not essential to the validity of the rite. The popular idea that only believers are to be baptised, is erroneous. The Church scheme of creating a proxy-belief, professing a faith for incompetent childhood, is an absurdity, and a vain attempt to create a claim for union with Christ. Faith is a state of the soul which others cannot be surety for. Men may answer for themselves, and promise to teach others, but they cannot answer for the faith of others. In the nature of things it is impossible. Nor is belief essential prior to the reception of baptism. In no part of Scripture can it be found that Christ died only for believers; nor is it anywhere said, Baptise only believers. The command of Christ was most comprehensive, "baptise all nations." By no casuistry can nations be limited to mean believers only. The commission extends to all mankind, and is to be limited alone by the suggestions of propriety. All who are likely to be taught by the Gospel, and to continue professing Christians, may be baptised.

Spirit baptism ordinarily, but not invariably, operates within

Christ's outer or nominal kingdom. The carnal mind is subdued to the spiritual mind by the immediate influence of "the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead." *They are* the sons of God, *led by the Spirit* of God. And these are not limited to baptised persons "in the name of" God: Heathens, or Gentiles, "are *fellow-citizens* with the saints, and are of the household of God." The city, whose maker is God, is open to them as to Christians: there is no legislative act to shut them out. Their ignorance stands in the way of ready admission, but God does not exclude them. Those who have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, are *renewed in knowledge* after the image of Him that created him: where there is "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but Christ is all and in all." The Gospel is given to men to instruct them in knowledge, and men are thereby renewed in the spirit of their minds. Where the Gospel is preached there may be expected many renewed. But, on the other hand, God instructs some men by other means. An enlightened Pagan, awakened by the Spirit of God to a knowledge of the law of life in the inner man whereby the spiritual mind subdues the carnal mind, has an abiding in the city of God: he is a fellow-citizen with the saints. He may not be so well instructed in Divine lore; he may hold false opinions; his theology may be but indifferent; he may not know the true prophet that came into the world to teach man. But God has breathed into his soul the spirit of life; and he is not a murderer, or a liar, or an idolator. He knows that love is the fulfilling of the law, and he has been taught to repose his trust in God, and to conform his character to his highest conceptions of God's requirements. Christ is in him, though the name be not familiar to him. His nature is changed and renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him.

The opinion that the new covenant is one between God and men, wherein men have to vow faith and obedience, is false. If

the covenant were between God and men, it must necessarily be imperfect, as were preceding covenants. It must be imperfect to the full extent of all the possible contingencies arising out of man's fallibility and peccability. The new covenant is between God and Christ, and is a covenant of grace, and not of law; and is perfect. It is perfect in that it comprehends all men; it is perfect in that it puts away sin from some here, from all hereafter; it is perfect in that it is final; and it is perfect in that Christ for man fulfilled the law, by which men are redeemed from the curse of the law; it is perfect in that it comprehends a body on earth, who "know the Lord," who are accounted sinless, as very members of Christ's body by spiritual union.

Water baptism is not essential to salvation. Under the perfect covenant, all men are ultimately saved. Christ died a ransom for all.

The intention of water baptism is not, as some suppose, to give a title to salvation. Nor is the rite instituted to afford an opportunity for exhibiting faith; nor as a sacramental medium for imparting the new nature in Christ. It is not intended to be an agent directly for burying the nature derived from the first Adam, and implanting a new nature given by the second Adam. Only those in Christ Jesus, made so by direct influence of the Spirit, by election (Rom. ix. 11), are heirs and joint heirs with Christ. These alone on earth are conformed to the image of God's Son. These alone on earth have the new nature in Christ. Nor is water baptism instituted to be the medium of a covenant between God and men, wherein if men fail they forfeit a title to heaven. The rite is instituted, apparently, to be the means of external union with God, whereby the kingdoms of this world may be gathered into the kingdom of God, and so "become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." It is instituted to be the medium for gathering within the circle of Gospel influence by which "God may be known upon earth, His saving health unto all nations."

The expression of our Lord, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" which gave rise to the belief that water baptism was needful to salvation, and to eternal life, is explained by the term "kingdom of God" being applied in two senses; whereby our Lord declared that without water baptism a man could not enter into the outer kingdom, and without Spirit baptism a man could not enter into the inner kingdom. A new birth by water is a birth out of darkness and heathenism into the marvellous Gospel light of Christianity, and a new birth of the Spirit gives the spiritual mind, and confers heirship with Christ, and gives admission on earth into His spiritual kingdom. Our Lord, in His discourse with Nicodemus, was not speaking of heavenly but of earthly things. It had reference to the two states, or two characters, of the earthly kingdom.

Adding to this course of argument what has previously been advanced upon the unity and purity of the Church, the subjects of priesthood, and promises of Christ, and the perversions of ecclesiastical divinity, we shall not find it difficult to avow that the claims of an insulated self-created body to a divine mission to baptise with the Holy Ghost, is unscriptural; nor shall we hesitate to avow the truth propounded at the head of this paper, that "water baptism admits to the outer or nominal kingdom; Spirit baptism to the inner or true kingdom; the one baptism being independent and irrespective of the other."

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TRUTHS MAINTAINED.

(No. VII.)

THE EUCHARIST.

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THE EUCHARIST NOT A SACRIFICE, BUT A COMMEMORATION OF A COMPLETED SACRIFICE.

THE Eucharist is beheld from two opposite points of view. From one, a belief is engendered that it is an emblem or symbol: from the other, that it is a continuous reality. Thus two opposing theories are raised. Within the range of these two theories are found many diverse minor opinions, but these may be classed with one or other of the opposing theories.

The Romanists and High Churchmen hold the bread and wine to be the real body and blood, and to manifest the corporal presence. Protestants of every hue hold them to be emblems, and symbolically to represent the body and blood. The former class believe in transubstantiation, or, the Real Presence in transmuted elements; the latter, in unchanged elements, and in sacramental or spiritual presence. The former hold the Eucharistic rite to be a true sacrifice; the latter, a commemoration of the one true sacrifice.

The opinion of the latter I shall attempt to maintain. It is my purpose to show that the Eucharist is not a sacrifice but commemorative of a finished completed work—the sacrifice "once offered"—"once for all."

It is not denied that the rite is commemorative by those who advocate it to be a true sacrifice, but they contend that besides being commemorative it is a *true propitiatory* sacrifice.

And, necessarily, great importance is attached to the maintenance of this opinion. For not only, if it be true, are the consequences flowing out of it momentous, but it follows that a sacrificial priesthood is essential. If the bread and wine be changed by consecration there needs a consecrating medium. Well, therefore, is the doctrine of transubstantiation, or, the Real Presence, called "the hinge of the question between the two religions."*

On this very important subject, it is needful that we fully comprehend the doctrines that flow out of the two theories. For this purpose we will place before our readers the published declarations of the Roman Church, and of one of her earnest living advocates; and with these the doctrines of a Protestant, though not as we think fully, reformed Church—the Church of England. A reason for giving the doctrines of the Anglican Church, is, not only because they are opposed to the Roman, but because, through misconception of her doctrines, and by reason of what there is yet left of the levitical element in her constitution, some of her members are advocating the doctrine of a true Eucharistic sacrifice. We shall, therefore, present our readers with the opinions of these apostate members.

The canons of the Church of Rome concerning the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, as decreed at the Council of Trent, are—

Canon I.—If any one shall deny, that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist are verily, really, and substantially contained the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but shall say that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema.

Canon II.—If any one shall say, that in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of the bread and wine

* Lectures on the Eucharist, Dr. Wiseman, p. 102.

remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, the species only of the bread and wine remaining, which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most aptly calls transubstantiation; let him be anathema.

CANON III.—If any one shall deny, that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each species, and under every part of each species, when separated; let him be anathema.

CANON IV.—If any one shall say, that after the consecration is completed the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the admirable sacrament of the Eucharist, but (are there) only during the use, whilst it is being taken, and not either before or after; and that in the hosts, or consecrated particles, which after communion are reserved or remain, the true body of the Lord remaineth not; let him be anathema.

CANON V.—If any one shall say, either that the chief fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the remission of sins, or, that from it other effects do not result; let him be anathema.

CANON VI.—If any one shall say, that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored, with even the worship external of latria,* and is, consequently, neither to be venerated with a special festive celebration, nor to be solemnly borne about in processions, according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of the holy Church; or is not to be proposed publicly to the people to be worshipped, and that the worshippers thereof are idolaters; let him be anathema.

CANON VII.—If any one shall say that it is not lawful for

* Worship of the highest order. See Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Chap. v., on the Worship and Veneration to be shown to the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

the sacred Eucharist to be received in the *Sacrarium,* but that immediately after consecration it must necessarily be distributed amongst those at hand; or that it is not lawful that it be carried honourably to the sick; let him be anathema.

CANON VIII.—If any one shall say that Christ, presented in the Eucharist, is eaten spiritually only, and not also sacramentally and really; let him be anathema.*

That it may not be supposed we bring forward exploded bygone doctrines of a former age, or those peculiar to ultra Italian Romanism, we give the declared sentiments of one of the Church of Rome's living Anglican advocates. Cardinal Wiseman has delivered a series of lectures on the Eucharist, with a view to prove from Scripture the doctrine of transubstantiation, and he concludes them in these words:—

"In concluding these lectures on the Scriptural proofs of the Real Presence, I will simply say, that throughout them, I have spoken of the doctrine as synonymous with Transubstantiation. For as by the Real Presence I have understood a corporal presence, to the exclusion of all other substances, it is evident that the one is, in truth, equivalent to the other. On this account I

* I have preferred giving the whole of the Canons which have relation to transubstantiation. This paper may fall into the hands of Protestants and Romanists who may not be fully aware of the tendencies of this doctrine. Unreflecting, they may not have heeded its awful consequences. It leads, necessarily, to the belief, as we see, that the whole Christ is contained in every separated particle of the consecrated elements; and settled in this belief, Romanists demand that veneration and worship be paid to each and every part. With principles based on this opinion, it is idle to suppose that Popery can be moderate, quiescent, and contented sectarianism. It may seem to repose amid hostile sects, where the arm of the law is strong enough to preserve order; but sincere Popery, if it be true to itself, must demand pre-eminence. If her priests really elevate in the consecrated bread or wafer the very body, soul, and divinity of Christ, or God Himself, they are bound to demand that the very highest worship be paid. In this we find a partial explanation of the earnestness of the intolerant creed.

have contended for the literal meaning of our Saviour's words; leaving it as a matter of inference that the Eucharist, after consecration, is the body and blood of Christ."

Consistently with this doctrine of transubstantiation, and linked with it, as a matter of course, is that of an appointed priesthood, a separated body to consecrate. On what is called the Sacrament of Orders, the first canon is,—

"If any one shall say that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood, or that there is not any power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord, and of remitting and retaining sins, but only an office and bare ministry of preaching the Gospel, or that those who do not preach are not priests at all; let him be anathema."

Having presented the Roman theory of the Eucharist, we will now exhibit the Anglican.

The Church of England theory is, that the Eucharist is commemorative, and that the One Atonement is "a full, perfect, and sufficient Atonement, Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." This is the language of her Communion Service, and in her Articles the teaching is similar. She repudiates the doctrine of transubstantiation, and maintains that those only who worthily receive the communion partake of the body and blood of Christ "after a spiritual and heavenly manner."

We give these as the sentiments of a partially reformed Church; and, as far as stated, we heartily concur. But, as we do not hold with her entire constitution, we will touch upon the defects, with regard to the Eucharist, we think we discover. And we do so because, in bringing them forward, we shall prepare an explanation for the sentiments of the High Church party within her pale.

The defects, we think, to be found in the language she employs in her Communion Service, and in the levitical element maintained in her constitution in reference to Ordination and the Sacraments.

We think the language she employs in the Communion objectionable, but chiefly inasmuch as it sometimes gives a perverse tendency. Mention is made of "*a sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving," of "*a lively sacrifice* of ourselves, our souls, and bodies," and of being unworthy to offer "*any sacrifice.*" Now, though this language is not intended to convey the impression, that by the Eucharist a true sacrifice, or a sacrifice at all is offered, yet it leads some to the conclusion that a sacrifice is intended. The employment of the word *sacrifice* has helped, no doubt, together with other causes, to carry some of her members into the arms of the Church of Rome. The Church of England does not view the rite as a sacrifice, but as "a continual remembrance of Christ's death." She holds the Eucharist to be commemorative; and the language of her service should so conform to this leading idea as never to lose sight of it, or render it secondary. We do not deny the language employed is Scriptural, and if it did not mislead, we should not wholly object to it. The sacred writers use it with propriety, because properly applied. They use it as affording figures of speech, derived from a Hebrew ritual, to express spiritual meanings which the respective Hebrew rites indicated. Thus "a sacrifice" of praise and thanksgiving with peace-offerings, made under the Hebrew polity in a material ritual (Lev. v. 11, 12), under the Gospel, consists "in the fruit of our lips giving thanks to God's name" (Heb. xiii. 15). The language, then, is not inapt, of course, as employed by the sacred New Testament writers. But it becomes inapt in a service commemorative of a finished work, which is neither heightened or diminished by men's acts. The Lord's sacrifice may become more spiritually sustentatious as accepted with more or less faith, but its efficacy, as a finished work, is in no way affected. It needs no sacrifice on man's part to render it efficacious. No sacrifice is intended by the Anglican Communion Service, and, therefore, the word sacrifice may, with propriety, and we think with advantage, be left out.

Another cause for misapprehension exists in the maintenance of a levitical principle in Ordination, which is made to bear on the Eucharist. It is supposed that "a ghostly power" is bestowed, at Ordination, needful to the due consecration of the Eucharist. By this supposed power only is it thought that the bread and wine become changed and fitted for the celebration of the Communion. This opinion is common to all the Anglican divines. It impresses some one way, some another. The Evangelicals suppose the bread and wine *thereby* spiritually to convey grace; the High Churchmen that they *thereby* not only spiritually convey grace, but actually present the very corporal body and blood of our Lord. Herein is a further reason for journeying to Rome. Nor need the journey be much wondered at. Divines brought up in the Anglican Church have so much of the false principles of Rome instilled, that when enquiry is awakened they pass onward by a natural movement. They do not all at once plunge headlong into all the errors of Rome, but being educated in principles falsely based, they cannot but pass onward to wrong conclusions if the principles be legitimately and honestly pursued out. Properly, there is no midway resting-place. The wonder is, that those who linger half-way fancy themselves Protestants. Protestantism is based on the Gospel of Grace and Free Justification. Romanism is based on men's Mediation and Justification by Works. Both cannot be right; or one a little right and a little wrong, and the other a little right and a little wrong. The truth lies not midway. It is wholly with the one or with the other. Protestantism carries direct to a belief in a completed Atonement and Free Justification; Romanism carries to a belief in external helps and aids of a mediating, ministering, consecrating priesthood. Protestantism views the Atonement as final and all-sufficient; Romanism views it as aided and strengthened, and its full virtue brought out in the acts of a delegated priestly power.*

* See the Canons of the Church of Rome on the Sacrifice of the Mass

Arising out of the two causes stated, it is maintained by some of the clergy of the Church of England that the holy Eucharist is a real and true sacrifice. Among recent writers, a late archdeacon of the English Church, while yet archdeacon, put forth his sentiments upon this subject. They are—

That Christ's sacrifice is perfect, complete, final; but that Christ appointed a priesthood, which this writer, like the Romanists, calls an *external* priesthood, as distinguished from the body of Christians whom he recognises as kings and priests "because anointed in Christ;" and that one office of the external priesthood *is to offer the one perfect sacrifice continuously*. His idea of the priesthood is, that it is twofold—internal and external: the internal, which is hidden and universal in every member; the external, which is visible and particular delegated to the sacerdotal order by Christ Himself." The priesthood, though to him it presents this twofold aspect, he views as but "one priesthood." The Eucharist, in relation to the external priesthood, he believes to be "a real and true sacrifice." But he does not mean by this "a sacrifice added to the sacrifice of the cross." He deems it "representative and commemorative"—"a visible memorial and representation of Christ's crucifixion and oblation." Though he thinks it a true sacrifice, he yet deems it symbolical. When our Lord brake bread, and poured out wine, and declared them to be His body and blood, "our blessed Lord did truly, in a *symbolical* act, offer and give Himself to die upon the cross." Though the act of breaking bread and pouring out wine is viewed as symbolical, yet the words spoken—"This is my body, and this is my blood"—are received to have been spoken literally. When "our blessed Lord took bread, and said, This is my body, and the cup, saying, This is my blood, He did not speak in metaphor and figure; His words were spirit and life. What He spake they are; what they are we (the external priesthood) offer. In that holy sacrament He is really present; and by His real presence it is the one and

continual offering of Himself."* The external priesthood the writer views as "the expression and embodying of the internal, which thereby fulfils its ministry of *sacrifice* and worship. It is as the ministry of the body to the powers and endowments of the soul, as speech is to thought, or power to will. But, whether internal or external, it is all one priesthood still: the priesthood of Christ descending from the head to the body, whether he offers the body in Himself, and the body, in and for itself, offers Him unto the Father. In this, then, we see what is the Christian sacrifice. It is Christ in heaven offering Himself in visible presence; and on earth by this ministering priesthood offering Himself in the sacrament of His body and blood." The declaration of Paul, that Christ "should not offer himself often" (Heb. ix. 25, 26), is held not to be violated, inasmuch as Christ, by the external priesthood, is not offered up often, but "evermore." "Evermore: not that He should offer Himself often, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; not often, but evermore; reconciling us continually, after all our sins of wilfulness, ignorance, infirmity; making stedfast the peace He has wrought between God and us upon the cross."†

These sentiments may fairly be assumed to be the sentiments of the Anglican High Church divines. They are put forward by a former member of this body; and it is not because he, with others, are gone to Rome, that those left behind repudiate them. In fact, they are the sentiments of Anglicans.‡

* This sentiment explains the reason for such frequent communions as are in recent times celebrated. The frequent communions of the Anglican is thus held to be analogous to the mass of the Roman Church.

† Archdeacon Manning's Sermon xii., "The Only Sacrifice."

‡ "A system of worship upon earth is the necessary correlative to a work of intercession in heaven. The one implies the other. And,

The Roman sentiments concerning the mass are analogous, only expressed in different terms. Both comprehend the intervention of a delegated body to offer the sacrifice to be propitiatory for daily committed sins. Romanists profess to "immolate in a *bloodless* manner that *same Christ* who once offered Himself in a *bloody* manner." They teach that this their sacrifice "is truly propitiatory;" "for the Lord, appeased by the oblation thereof, and granting the grace and gift of penitence, forgives even heinous crimes and sins."*

Having placed before our readers the published sentiments of Romanists and High Churchmen, we proceed to show that—

1. Their doctrines cannot be true, because inconsistent in themselves.

2. Their imagined sacrifice not a true sacrifice, because a true sacrifice consists in a personal willing offering.

3. The alleged Scripture proofs for the doctrine of transubstantiation cannot be sustained.

4. An "evermore" sacrifice through the continuous acts of a supposed deputed body is opposed to the gospel. The One sacrifice is perfect, complete, final, and in no way affected, as regards its efficacy, by the sayings and doings of a body called "a visible external priesthood."

The Roman and High Church doctrines cannot be true, because inconsistent in themselves.

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therefore, in that early age of the Church, when our Lord's mediation was felt to be the life of the Christian community, there was an universal and unqualified assertion, that as certainly as Christ's sacrifice was pleaded effectually above, it was likewise truly participated in *Gospel ordinances*, and that those things which were done on earth in the Church's united acts, *made part of that grand sacrifice* which has its consummation in heaven. So that, while all other parts of the Christian Ritual were spoken of *as sacrificial in their character*, the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, was called emphatically *the Christian Sacrifice*."—*Doctrine of the Incarnation*.—Archdeacon Wilberforce.

* Decrees of the Council of Trent. Sacrifice of the Mass, chap. ii.

And first of the Anglican High Church sentiments, formed under the vacillating influence of two opposing theories.

The contradictory character of the opinions of the Anglican High Church divines is upon the surface. The one sacrifice is "perfect, complete, final," and yet needs completion on earth through "the ministering priesthood" "offering Christ in the Sacrament of His body and blood." Again, the breaking of bread, and the pouring out wine, "were symbolical acts," and yet our Lord spake not "in metaphor and figure." The very acts done were symbolical, and the words in relation thereto were not symbolical.

Of the Romanists' opinions, Our Lord's sacrifice was "after a *bloody* manner," and Romanists offer that *same Christ* "after a *bloodless* manner." They imitate the bloodless symbolical acts, and profess, like the Anglicans, that the bread and wine are "symbols of those same things,"* and yet claim to offer that *same Christ*, who offered Himself, after a bloody manner. They maintain "The victim is one and the same, the same, now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the Cross, the manner alone of offering being different."†

How reconcile these glaring inconsistencies? If the one sacrifice be complete, perfect, final, surely it needs no continuous acting to make it complete, perfect, final. The One Sacrifice must be held to be perfect, and needs no helping through; or else, imperfect, and needs helping through. And surely, if the breaking bread and pouring out wine were symbolical acts, they could not be both symbolical and realities of the things symbolized. They could not symbolically represent a sacrifice, and be, at the same time, the very true sacrifice. Either one or other of these opposing positions must be given up.

If when our Lord brake bread, and said, "This is my body," and when He poured out wine He said, "This is my blood," He,

* Sacrifice of the Mass, chap. i. † Ibid, chap. ii.

by symbolical acts, offered up Himself, the true offering did not consist in the breaking of bread and pouring out wine, but in the intention thereby symbolized. The true offering was His own body to crucifixion and blood to spilling. The symbolical acts were a pictorial language, so to speak, expressive of a free-will offering. If the acts at the Passover Supper were, as it seems we are *all* agreed, symbolic, and shadowed forth realities, they were not the realities. To say that they were, is to make a symbol and its reality one and the same thing. This, to the commonest understanding, is sheer nonsense. There are symbols, out of number, in the Bible, and when we speak of symbols we mean some things which *represent* some other things; we do not mean that they are those some other things. The very idea of a symbol is that it is representative. We cannot conceive of a symbol, knowing what it symbolizes, without having present to our thoughts the accompanying reality. Without it, or without the imagination raising up some accompanying thing, it is not a symbol. A symbol to be called actually the thing signified is nothing short of nonsense. If the acts at the Passover Supper were symbols, then the true offering did not consist in them. Either they were symbols or were not symbols. Admitting them to have been symbols, our Lord's flesh and blood was not then actually offered. They were offered mentally, in intention prospectively, and followed up by the positive sacrifice on the cross.

To assert that the bloodless symbol and bloody offering were one and the same thing is manifestly wrong.

To be consistent, Romanists and High Churchmen should deny that the prior acts were symbolic, then may they logically assert that their imitative acts are not symbolic. If the breaking bread and pouring out wine were symbols, it is plain the breaking bread and pouring out wine of a supposed deputed body are symbols. But to admit that the continuous acts are symbolic would be to consent to the overthrow of the Roman Creed. The imitative acts are, therefore, said "to offer up that *same* Christ in a *bloodless* manner."

Romanists should assert that the actual offering was in the bread and wine, and then may they, with some show of consistency, assert that they offer up that same Christ in transmuted bread and wine.

If Christ offered not Himself to an actual immolation in the form of bread and wine, how can Romanists offer Christ's very body to an actual immolation in consecrated bread and wine. Shall they pretend to do more than did our Lord? If He only symbolically, and in intention offered Himself to a prospective immolation, shall they do more and offer Him to a positive immolation? Are the continuous acts to rise superior to the originating act? No, they must confess in the language of Mr. Manning, though written with an opposite end in view, "That what our Lord spake that His words are; and what they are, the external priesthood offer." If our Lord's Passover acts were symbolical, the bread and wine were symbols, and if symbols, then they continue symbols now.

Romanists contend that in the sacrifice of the mass that same Christ is contained and immolated in a *bloodless* manner who once offered himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross.* What contradictions does this assertion involve?

If Christ offered Himself in a *bloody* manner, then He did not literally offer Himself in bread and wine after a *bloodless* manner.

If Christ offered *not* Himself after a *bloodless* manner, how is it that Romanists offer "that *same Christ*" after a *bloodless* manner?

If the offering of our Lord consisted in the symbolic act, then was it not an offering after a bloody manner. If it consisted in the actual offering of His own body to the torture of the thorns, the nails, and the spear, whereby His blood was poured out, then was it after a bloody manner. The bloody manner consists not

* Sacrifice of the Mass, chap. ii.

in the symbolic act, but in the positive sufferings; the victim was Christ Himself. The bloody manner would have been absent if the offering had stopped short in the symbolic act. The symbolic act Romanists only imitate, and yet they contend that the victim they offer "is one and the same—the same now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different."* If Christ offered Himself after a bloody manner, He did not offer Himself actually in bread and wine. If Christ's true offering was His own body, how do Romanists offer the same, after a bloodless manner, in bread and wine? If they really do offer the same victim, they must offer Him after a bloody manner. If their offering be after a bloodless manner, then is the victim not the same, but bread and wine. To be consistent, the bloody manner of the true sacrifice should be acted in a bloody manner in the imitative act; or, Romanists should contend that Christ was immolated after a bloodless manner.

But then, where would the Gospel be? Without the shedding of blood is no remission of sins. The whole economy of spiritual life, in relation to man, is based on the shedding of blood; or the Crucifixion, or overcoming, or subduing of man's corporal or carnal nature, typified, exemplified, and purified in Christ. (Heb. ix.) But of this great fundamental truth Romanists are supremely ignorant, or they would not contend for a *bloodless* sacrifice.

The manifold inconsistencies which reign over the doctrines of a propitiatory offering in a bloodless sacrifice make it evident that the doctrines are not based in truth.

Romanists imagined sacrifice not a true sacrifice, because a true sacrifice consists in a willing personal offering. Even the typical Hebrew offerings, which looked foward to the true sacrifice, were personal offerings. Nor can a bloodless sacrifice be the true

* Sacrifice of the Mass, chap. ii.

sacrifice: the typical sacrifices were bloody as centred in the one perfect bloody sacrifice.

With regard to the doctrine of a true sacrifice, it is needful that we get a right conception of what it means. The consecration of bread and wine, or the breaking bread and pouring out wine, or the distribution of, or presenting them to the people, is not a sacrifice. Sacrifice consists in something given up or destroyed. The Pagan sacrifices consisted in various offerings in animal life immolated; and so the Patriarchal; and so the Mosaic sacrifices. The true sacrifice consisted in Christ offering His own body for immolation. The Pagan offerings dimly shadowed forth this truth; the Patriarchal and the Mosaic offerings plainly shadowed it forth. These latter had their efficacy in it. Under the Mosaic law the priests were ordained "to offer gifts and sacrifices." These looked forward to the gift and sacrifice of our Lord, who, as our Great High Priest, must needs have somewhat to offer. "For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore, *it is of necessity* that this man have somewhat to offer" (Heb. viii. 3). A true sacrifice consists in a willing personal offering. The true perfect sacrifice consisted in the manhood, the natural body taken into Deity, being offered as an oblation for sin (Heb. ix. 25—28). The true typical sacrifices consisted in offerings from flocks and herds, "gifts according to the law," whose blood became propitiatory and sanctifying as looking forward to, and centering in, the perfect sacrifice.

The typical sacrifices had their virtue in the shedding of blood, which "served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." And it is by *the blood* of Jesus that we enter into the holiest "by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. x.). A bloodless offering would not have been after the pattern showed unto Moses. "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission of sins." Shall a

bloodless sacrifice, in direct opposition to this declaration, serve for the removal of "even heinous crimes and sins?" The true sacrifice is based upon the shedding of blood; a bloodless sacrifice, therefore, cannot be a true propitiatory sacrifice.

The true sacrifice consisted in Christ's offering of His own body on the tree. And it is through the vail, His flesh, that we enter into the holy of holies. By this is intimated, that the carnal or natural man has to be sacrificed. There is, then, a true sacrifice which men can offer but only in and through a living union with Christ. Men of themselves can offer no true sacrifice (Rom. vii., viii.; Gal. iii. 10, 11). Romanists confess this. They are conscious that without union with Christ no sacrifice avails. But then they wholly mistake the character of the sacrifice demanded of men. They think it to consist in an imitation of a symbolic act; whereas it consists in subduing the carnal mind (Rom. viii.; xii.; Heb. xiii. 15). Perverting the language of our Lord, and putting false constructions on some Scripture passages, they affect to believe that there are instructions for a perpetual sacrifice of our Lord's true body. And though, as we have seen, the true sacrifice to consist in the shedding of blood, they contend that they are not only authorised, but commanded to offer the sacrifice of our Lord's body as a perpetual memorial, and as propitiatory for daily committed sins. The theory of this plainly depends upon the doctrine of Transubstantiation for support. For if only bread and wine be offered up, even as symbols, there can be no true sacrifice of the Lord's body. We will, therefore, enter upon the alleged Scripture proofs for this doctrine: we deny their existence, and affirm that—

The alleged Scripture proofs for the doctrine of transubstantiation cannot be sustained.

This declaration has been proved over and over again, and it is with reluctance we engage in this part of our subject. It gives neither pleasure nor honour

"To strike a vanquished foe."

But it seems needful that something should be said upon it. The series of "Truths Maintained" demand that this find admittance to perfect the series. And as, in some respects, I advance beyond all Protestant writers, my labours would not be complete if this portion of the subject were untouched. I shall, however, be as brief upon it as possible.

If Cardinal Wiseman's Lectures on the Eucharist be read, it will be found that the basis of his argument for transubstantiation is laid upon the latter part of our Lord's discourse at Capernaum, narrated by St. John in the sixth chapter. The whole eight lectures are built upon this. Of course, in 300 pages of letter-press there is a good deal of by-play, seemingly earnest of the principal work. All this we consider may be quietly shelved. Those who think otherwise, we refer them to "Faber on the Doctrine of Transubstantiation," where will be found successful attacks upon every trifling position. We think the "by-play" may be shelved, because we believe the main position upon which the rest depend is untenable, and, if we show that there is no scriptural standing ground, then it follows, as a consequence, that

"The battle-field is won."

The whole eight lectures are employed chiefly to prove that our Lord's words, as narrated by St. John, beginning at the 48th verse, onwards to the 61st, are intended literally. Romanists confess that the preceding part of the discourse is figurative, but that the portion stated is literal. Now, if it can be shown that a literal interpretation is repugnant to the Gospel, and renders contradictory the declarations within the limits of the portion said to be literally spoken, of course all the by-play remarks of the learned Cardinal fail of any force they may be supposed otherwise to possess. If the main argument be false, upon which all the others more or less depend, the whole scheme tumbles into a shapeless mass; coherence is lost: the base being unsound, the superstructure necessarily falls.

We will enter into an examination of the discourse at Capernaum, to ascertain, if we can, whether it affords authority for the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The discourse commences at verse 26, and is continued to nearly the end of the chapter. It arose out of the circumstance of many seeking Jesus after the miracle He wrought of feeding a great multitude with five barley loaves and two small fishes. Jesus said unto those who sought Him, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracle, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." He then proceeds to tell of a meat which perisheth not; the true bread from heaven—the bread which God gives to His people—the bread of life. In the latter part of this discourse our Lord used the words—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." It is maintained by Romanists, that our Lord, by this declaration, intends a literal manducation of His body. The questions to be decided are, Is it a literal manducation intended? according to the Romanist theory; or, Is it a spiritual feasting on Christ? according to the Protestant theory.

The discourse up to the 48th verse is held by all to be figurative. The Cardinal happily expresses himself on this point:

"In the first part, our Saviour speaks of Himself as *bread* which came down from heaven (v. 32—35). The figurative application of *bread*, or *food*, to wisdom, or doctrines, by which the mind is nourished, was one in ordinary use among the Jews, and other orientals; consequently, it could present no difficulty here. The figure is used by Isaiah (lv. 1, 2): 'All you that thirst, come to the waters, and you that have no money, make haste, buy and eat. Why do you spend your money for that which is not *bread*, and your labour for that which doth not satisfy you? *Hearken diligently to me, and eat that which is good.*' Perhaps the passage from Deuteronomy (viii. 3), quoted by our Saviour (Matt. iv. 4) contains the same idea: 'not on

bread alone doth man live, but on every *word* that proceedeth from the mouth of God.'* Jeremiah (xv. 16) has the same image: 'Thy *words* were found, and I did *eat* them.' Hence also in Amos (viii. 11), the Almighty places these two ideas in a striking contrast when He says, that He 'will send forth a famine into the land, not a famine of *bread*, nor a thirst (drought) of water, but of hearing the *word* of God.' The same figure occurs still more strikingly in the sapiential books. Solomon represents to us Wisdom as thus addresing herself to all men: 'Come, *eat my bread*, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you.'† The book of Ecclesiasticus (xv. 3) has precisely the same image: 'With the *bread of life* and *understanding* she shall feed him, and give him the water of wholesome *wisdom to drink*.' "‡

The Cardinal advances more to show that this figurative language was a phraseology familiar to the Jews. But then he contends it was limited to doctrines, and could not be pushed farther than that. Jeremiah, or Isaiah, could not have been represented in the passages quoted from them, as saying, "Come and eat *me*." Consequently, he maintains that the expression "eat my flesh" is literal language. He admits that Wisdom is supposed to speak in similar language, but then "Wisdom is speaking as an abstract personage, an allegorical being." In answer to this, though our Lord was not an allegorical being, yet it should not be forgotten that He is emphatically "The Word" —the Word which the Apostles handled of the Word of life, and which Word of life was proclaimed through the mouths of the holy prophets since the world began. To eat Christ, then, is to eat the Word, or to feed on the Book of life, or Wisdom.

The former part of the discourse is received on all hands as figurative, the latter part by Romanists as literal. The literal

* Compare Eccles. xxiv. 5. † Prov. ix. 5.
‡ Wiseman's Lectures on the Eucharist, p. 54.

commences, according to Cardinal Wiseman's notions, at verse 48. At verse 48, he contends, a new subject is introduced. Previously, our Lord had been speaking of doctrines, or spiritual truths, under the figure of bread. At verse 48 our Lord commenced to speak of a literal eating of His flesh, and a drinking of His blood.

The point of separation is not an agreed subject among Romanists.* No other than Romanists see any separation. Romanists see two separations. The majority see a separation, or transition, at verse 51; Cardinal Wiseman sees one at verse 48. Other men will continue to doubt whether there be any transition at all.

Simple-minded men, reading the Scriptures for edification, and not for disputation, are contented to think the whole discourse one and homogeneous. The perfect parallelism, which is found between the beginning and the end, shows that no change of subject is introduced.

In the beginning is found, "The bread of God, which cometh down from heaven." "I am the bread of life." "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert."	Towards the close is found, "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven." "I am the bread of life." "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness."

The parallelism does not extend to the employment of the word eat, and this it is which enables Romanists to see, in the beginning of the discourse, a spiritual meaning under figurative expressions; in the latter part, a physical meaning in literal language. Cardinal Wiseman writes, "The point at issue, therefore, between us

* "It will appear, from what I have said, that I am not satisfied with the transition being placed, as it usually is, at the fifty-first verse. I have no hesitation in placing the transition at the forty-eighth."—*Wiseman's Lectures*, page 45.

and our adversaries is twofold. First, Is there a change of subject at the forty-eighth verse? secondly, Is the transition to a real eating of the body of Christ? The double affirmative reply, which we give, is a fair and obvious point of hermeneutical enquiry, and, as such, I shall proceed to treat it in our next lectures."

This discourse of our Lord alone affords a basis whereon can be attempted to be built, on hermeneutic principles, the doctrine of transubstantiation. The words of institution for the Eucharist are so simple that divines cannot, hermeneutically, build arguments upon them.* Upon the discourse at Capernaum alone, is attempted to be reared the doctrine of the Real Presence, or, the transmutation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

The words of our Lord at the Last Supper, when he took bread, and said, "This is my body," and when He took the cup, and said, "This is my blood," are so simple, and unaccompanied by other remarks, that, hermeneutically, they cannot be proved to affirm that the bread and wine were changed. But yet, they are so specific, that they appear to claim a belief in a literal meaning, and, unless a literal interpretation violates the Gospel truths, and disturbs the Gospel harmonies, they should be received literally. Strange to Protestants as the doctrine of transubstantiation seems, there is nothing impossible to God; and if He please to communicate of His divine Essence, and thereby change a natural into a spiritual body, there is no denying His power to do so. But if such an interpretation violates the Gospel —if it be discovered that the Gospel scheme would be thereby disturbed, then it follows that such interpretation is necessarily false. We affirm, that if the doctrine of transubstantiation

* "The argument from the words of institution, strange as it may seem, is not so easy to propose in a hermeneutical form as that from John vi., and that on account of its extreme simplicity."—*Wiseman, Lecture* v., page 174.

can be proved, then is the Gospel false, for they are at opposites.

We will not attempt to follow Cardinal Wiseman through all the windings of his ingenious sophistries. We shall not attempt to dispute with him whether there be a transition of subject at verse 48, or any other verse in John vi. We will grant to him, if he will, that there may be a change of subject where he desires to find it. This concession narrows the subject. It confines the enquiry to one point, namely, whether a real eating of Christ's flesh and blood is consistent with the language of the part of the discourse in connection with the declaration, "eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood." If from within the said-to-be-separated part we prove the inconsistency of a literal interpretation of the words, then we need not trouble ourselves to disprove the alleged separation. If from within the latter portion of the discourse we discover expressions which militate against a literal interpretation, then onr Lord did not intend a positive manducation, but a spiritual feasting on Him.

And first, we will see whether the language, as in the former part, is figurative. If any part be figurative, there is room for suspicion, that "eat the flesh and drink the blood" are figurative expressions. Not that we will contend they had no reference to a physical meaning. No doubt a double meaning attached to them. Primarily, a spiritual, and secondarily, to the rite not then instituted, but intended to be instituted. Our purpose will be to show that their primary meaning is opposed to a literal interpretation. Their secondary meaning, is, therefore, simply allusive. It could not be that the Eucharist was intended to present Christ's real body and blood; for if in their primary sense the words are figurative and spiritual, in their secondary they could not be literal and physical.

With regard to the language employed, it appears to be almost wholly figurative. It begins, "I am that bread of life." It continues, "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven,"—

"the living bread,"—"the bread that I will give is my flesh,"—"he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." Bread is not flesh. The man Christ Jesus, if literal flesh, was not literal bread. He was not literal bread. He was spiritual bread, given to nourish the inner man, and to give spiritual life, and, therefore, "bread of life." The same meaning attaches to these expressions as to similar expressions found in the preceding part of the discourse. No other meaning can be given them. To assign them other is to make them ridiculous, senseless, and unintelligible.

Now, if this be so, why is one expression to be made literal, where other expressions, in relation thereto, are figurative? If "the bread that I will give is my flesh" is figurative language, why should "eat the flesh" be literal? Can the interpretation that it is be based upon sound hermeneutics? Does an unharmonious relation of parts to a whole suggest the right mode of interpretation? Certainly not. We believe, that as so much is figurative, the probability is that the other parts are figurative.

Now, that our Lord did not intend to convey a literal meaning of the words "eat the flesh," we shall discover, if we examine the part of the discourse said to be separated.

We find it declared, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Does this positive declaration, if it be interpreted literally, or if spiritually, harmonize most with the Gospel? We declare, if interpreted literally it opposes the Gospel; if interpreted spiritually it harmonizes with it. And further, only a spiritual interpretation will justify expressions found in connection with the declaration.

The fundamental doctrine of Christianity is belief in the Son of God. "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." In the words of our Lord, in this very discourse, "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life." And in reply to the enquiry, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on

Him whom He hath sent." Belief, then, is the very essence of the Gospel. It gives eternal life; and faith in Christ is the foundation of the work God requires of men.

If this fundamental doctrine be brought to bear on the expression "eat the flesh," which interpretation—the literal or the spiritual—most readily joins therewith?

It is declared that, "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you;" and it is also said, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." How best reconcile these apparently opposing declarations? Does the Protestant or the Romanist view of the former most readily accord with the latter? The Romanist view, which interprets a literal manducation, seems to flatly contradict the first declaration. For if without literally eating Christ's flesh there be no life, then simple belief without literal manducation can give no life. But yet the expression is most positive, that "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life." Now, how does the Protestant view reconcile these two declarations. The Protestant declares that a literal eating is not intended, but a spiritual feasting, which can only result as an act of faith. If there be a spiritual feasting there will be a belief in Christ. Thus the two expressions are reconciled by the Protestant, but stand opposed to each other by the Romanist view.

The declaration is explicit, and without reserve, that "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." If the Romanist creed be correct, and that by consecration there be a positive transmutation of bread and wine into Christ's flesh and blood, then all who partake thereof have eternal life. The mere fact of having eaten and drunk thereof will have given life. The declaration has no reserve that faith shall accompany the act, but "*whoso* eateth." If the Romanist doctrine be right, then all who have eaten have had eternal life, and that whether faith existed or not. But then we have expressions of a totally opposing character: "He that believeth not shall be damned;"

"He that believeth not is condemned already;" "They that believe not shall die in their sins." A literal manducation of transmuted bread does not necessarily give life. And yet "Whoso eateth hath life." A literal manducation, then, cannot be intended, because we see that such an interpretation mars the Gospel, and militates against Christ's other declarations.

That the words of our Lord, "Eat the flesh, and drink the blood," have a spiritual meaning, is confirmed by an expression that follows: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; *the flesh profiteth nothing*. This appears decisive of the whole question. For how reconcile this declaration with the Romanist interpretation of "eat the flesh." If, as Romanists avow, they offer up Christ's flesh, and that by their act they render it "propitiatory for the living and the dead," how is it Christ declares, in direct opposition, that "the flesh profiteth nothing?" How this expression should find admission, unless it be to convey that the preceding words have a spiritual meaning, it is difficult to conceive. Christ declares He gives His flesh "for the life of the world," and in the same breath says "the flesh profiteth nothing." If the Romanist theory be right, "the flesh profiteth everything."

And in order that no mistake may be made, and that if men misinterpret they shall do so wilfully and perversely, our Lord declared the words He spake to be spirit. "The words I speak unto you *they are spirit*." With this explicit declaration before us, what authority have Romanists to make the words carnal? If they are spirit, they have a spiritual meaning. If they are literal, and so carnal, then they have a carnal meaning, and the words are not "*spirit*." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If the words are spirit, a spiritual feasting is intended. If the Romanist declaration be true, that a literal manducation gives life and remission of sin, then are the words not "spirit," but fleshly and carnal.

That our Lord's words had not a fleshly meaning, we gather

from another declaration, which immediately follows them: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, *dwelleth in me, and I in him.*" To eat Christ's flesh, and drink His blood, obtain incorporation with Christ. Of course, if the Romanist theory be right, then all who partake of the consecrated bread and wine dwell in Christ, and He in them. If the bread be really transmuted into Christ's flesh, and the wine into Christ's blood, then, in accordance with the declaration, all who partake thereof "dwell in Christ, and He in them." Now let us try the words "eat the flesh, and drink the blood," by this touchstone.

It is important to notice that the in-dwelling does not refer to the future, but to the present. It is not shall dwell, but do dwell ("*dwelleth*"): they who eat Christ's flesh now, dwell while on earth in Christ.

To understand this we must enquire what it is to dwell in Christ. For unless we can understand it we cannot bring the test of experience to bear upon the enquiry, What does our Lord mean by eating His flesh? We must ascertain what are the marks by which men are known who dwell in Christ. By ascertaining these we can look back upon the past to see whether the eating according to the Romanists' doctrine be true or not. If it be true, then, as a matter of course, all who have partaken of the flesh Romanists provide will exhibit the marks of union. If it be false, then we may expect to find that no union has resulted, and that the flesh provided is other than Christ's flesh.

What are the marks whereby men are to be known who dwell in Christ?

1. They confess Christ (1 John iv. 15).
2. They love their fellow-men (John xiii. 34, 35; Gal. vi. 10).
3. They keep Christ's commandments (John xiv. 20—23).
4. They have freedom from the dominion of sin; that is, they cease to be under its tyrannical sway (1 John i. 6, 7; 1 John iii. 6).
5. They have the Spirit of Christ (Rom. viii. 9).

6. Having this Spirit, they have the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 22).

These are several marks whereby men may be known who dwell in Christ. Have all who have partaken of the consecrated bread and wine exhibited these several marks? If they have not, we may be quite sure that Romanists are labouring under a delusion. Christ is not the author of a lie. There His words stand—"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Have all who have eaten the consecrated wafer and the consecrated wine confessed Christ?—that is, believed in their inmost heart that He is very God, the great Jehovah? Have they loved all men? Have they kept Christ's commandments? Have they been freed from the tyrannical bondage of sin? Have they had the Spirit of Christ? Have they exhibited the fruits of the Spirit. Are answers to be sought for to these questions? Need answers be found by me? Need the pages of history be raked to discover examples to the contrary? Are they not written upon the past, and are they not being still written on the present, with pens of steel, as indelible as are the Arabic Hebraic characters on the rocks of Sinai, giving testimony to non-union? Is not written on heathen Christendom, as of yore on Babylonish wall, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin?" *Where* are found bitter hatred, intense love of tyrannical dominion, crimes of the deepest dye, *there* is not the Spirit of Christ; and "they who have not the Spirit of Christ are none of His." The flesh and blood such have eaten and drank have given no union with Him.

The bread which gives life in, and union with, Christ, is not literal bread, or supposed transmuted bread, but "bread which cometh down from heaven." The bread is Christ, the Word, or heavenly Wisdom, of which if a man partake, so that he spiritually feed on Christ, he shall live for ever; live now, live hereafter. The bread is not Christ's human mortal flesh, for, "the flesh

profiteth nothing." The bread is the Spirit of life, which quickeneth into life. The words which Christ spake are spirit and are life.

If bread and wine be really transmuted into Christ's flesh and blood, and become, as is asserted, the very body, blood, and divinity of Christ, yet if a man merely partake of the human flesh and material blood no union results, for "the flesh profiteth nothing." It is needful to feed on the divinity; and how feed on the divinity by carnal manducation?

Take another point of view. If bread and wine be really transmuted, union should result if a man eat thereof. But then, it is everywhere in the Gospel declared that union is a result of faith, the gift of God. Faith in Christ gives union with Christ, and faith is wholly from God. We are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; but faith, which alone gives union with Christ, it is asserted, over and over again, is the direct agency of God (John vi. 44, 45; Matt. xvi. 17; Rom. xii. 3; Ephes. xi. 8; Phil. i. 6, and i. 29; 1 Cor. xii. 9). The apostolic writings are full of the doctrine of faith, the work of God; and Jesus as God, being "the *author* and *finisher* of faith" (Heb. xii. 2). Jesus, as the author and finisher of faith, is "the way, the truth, and the life; and no man cometh unto the Father but by Christ" (John xiv. 6). No man cometh unto Christ but by being "drawn of the Father;" and no man cometh unto the Father but by Christ." In other words, Christ, as God, is the sole fountain of the well-spring of life, and only those permitted to drink thereof have life here, and union with God. Union with Christ, or God, results in no other way.

Again, all drawn unto Christ by God are "taught of God." If a literal manducation confers union, then are the masticators "taught of God." Has this been exhibited in the past, or is it being exhibited in the present? Does experience bear testimony to this? Not even Cardinal Wiseman will be hardy enough to assert that it does. We are not saying that all who have par-

taken of consecrated bread and wine have shown that they were not taught of God: some, no doubt, have been. We are asserting that all who have eaten of consecrated bread have not shown that they were taught of God. Whereas, if the Romanist teaching be true, all who partake of Christ's flesh in transmuted bread should be taught of God. If the words of our Lord cannot be gainsayed, that "He that eateth Christ's flesh, and drinketh His blood, dwelleth in Him," and that all who dwell in Christ "are taught of God," then, if the Romanist theory be right, all who partake of consecrated bread and wine are "taught of God." Are they taught of God?

Experience testifies to the reverse. Or why need so many to pay for masses to expedite their souls through purgatory, after partaking the Eucharist? If they are taught of God they are led by the Spirit of God; and all "who are led by the Spirit of God are heirs and joint heirs with Christ," and the departed of these are, therefore, in heaven with Christ. Of those remaining, if taught of God, why alarm themselves, and pay money to others to relieve them of their fears?

Again, experience testifies that partakers of the Eucharist are not "taught of God;" for too often afterward has been exhibited enmity to Christ. The rites of the Church—Confession, Absolution, Manducation of consecrated bread, have but too often led to fresh scenes of bloodshed, rapine, and blasphemy. The conscience, instead of being softened, has been hardened as if seared with a hot iron. Men are to be known by their fruits. Judged by these, men who have partaken of consecrated bread and wine have shewn that they were not taught of God.

Tried by the touchstone of the Gospel, we discover that all is not gold that glitters. Substances may shine and look like gold, but, after all, be very base metal.

Christ, when He said, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him," spoke a great and holy truth. But then He could not mean a literal manducation,

because a literal manducation, it is proved, gives not necessarily union with Christ; and it would most certainly do so if a manducation of His body in transmuted elements had been intended. Results have not flowed from the practice, which should if a true partaking of Christ had taken place. Our Lord could not, therefore, have meant that a manducation of consecrated bread and wine should give union. He meant a spiritual feasting on Him; the soul nourished in Him; the spirit quickened in Him.

To carry this part of our subject farther would only weaken the effect which this decisive line of argument should have.

If there be a transition at verse 48, as alleged, yet the language from verse 48 onward will not bear to be treated but in a spiritual sense, without violating grossly the great Gospel truths. It is certain, therefore, that our Lord intended the declaration, "eat the flesh, and drink the blood," in a spiritual sense.

Reposing fully, as we do, upon the internal evidence contained within the said-to-be-dismembered part of our Lord's discourse, we do not deem it at all needful to enter upon the enquiry, Whether there be a transition at verse 48, or any other verse. The structure of the whole discourse presents to our mind a perfect homogeneity, and it appears to us impossible to find any transition. To find and to make are two very different things. Some men, by legerdemain, can make things seem to be which are not. So far from a separation, or dismemberment, or transition existing, the homogeneity that pervades the whole, and the connection which exists throughout, seem to shew that the former part was entered upon for the purpose of applying a right meaning to the words in the latter part. Any unbiassed, candid person reading the discourse for himself will need no help to be convinced of the perfect unity of the whole discourse. The former part is admitted to be figurative, and the latter part we may be sure is also figurative. The words are spirit, and are life, and need to be spiritually construed. Our Lord no more meant the words "eat the flesh, and drink the blood," to be construed

literally, than when he declared, "I am the way," or "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." By these last words our Lord did not intend that men should go in and out through His fleshly body. He meant that by faith in Him they should pass through life guided by His teachings. In the words of the inspired Psalmist, men should now sing, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." The soul is restored from sin, and brought from death unto life, and nourished in God through the Word: thus are we led into the rich pastures God's love provides, and thus have we union with God, and not by a literal manducation of Christ's flesh.

Contented with what has been advanced, having relation to our Lord's discourse, in opposition to the Romanist doctrine, we will conclude the subject of Transubstantiation by a short extract from Faber in respect to its novelty:—"Something like Transubstantiation first attracted notice in the ninth century, and was immediately opposed by divines of the highest reputation; that the Roman Church did not venture to commit herself to this doctrine until the eleventh century; that she did not embody it in her formularies until the thirteenth; that it was warmly opposed during that and the following age; that it was, at length, established in superior life by dint of sanguinary persecutions; and that its authority was wholly derived from lying wonders, the interested assertions of Popes, and the equivocating sophisms of schoolmen."

Transubstantiation is, then, a fiction of interested sacerdotalism, and had its birth in the gross conceptions of a dark and corrupt age. Having arrived at this conclusion with regard to Transubstantiation, let us enquire into the opinion which asserts a belief in the principle of a continuous Sacrifice—the not-often-repeated

but "evermore sacrifice," that is said to exist in the acts of a supposed deputed agency. The principle we affirm to be false, and declare that

An "evermore" sacrifice through the continuous acts of a ministering priesthood is opposed to the Gospel. The One Sacrifice is perfect, complete, final, and, therefore, needs no continuous acting.

We have seen that some confusion reigns in the opinions of those who contend that the Eucharist is a true sacrifice. They believe it to be a symbol, and they do not believe it to be a symbol. It is the true body and blood, and it is symbolical of the true body and blood. Without strictly-defined opinions upon its true character there cannot but be confusion. The Eucharist cannot be both symbolical and real. If it be symbolical, it cannot be a true sacrifice, but only figures the true sacrifice, as did the typical sacrifices of old.

Further: if intended to be a true sacrifice, of course there will be found in the New Testament, as for the past in the Old Testament sacrifices, authority to constitute it a sacrifice. If there be no authority, we may be sure it is not a sacrifice. In a matter so all-important as would be a continuous act whereby vitality is said to be maintained, so that it constitute a propitiatory offering "for the living and the dead," of course Christ would give strict injunctions, and lay down formal laws for its observance. Under the Hebrew dispensation, as looking forward to the perfect sacrifice, we find this to have been the case; and, of course, if there be an analogous principle in Christianity, as looking backward to the One Atonement, there will be similar precise rules given.

But where can be found instructions of the kind? Where are any rules given? Where in the New Testament is authorised the perpetuation of an "evermore sacrifice?" Do our Lord's words, "Do this in remembrance of me," convey it? Are these words which authorise a sacrifice "propitiatory as well for the living as the dead?" Are these all that can be found to justify

an expectation that the priestly acts of a ministering body shall remove "even heinous crimes and sins?"

Surely not. For, if they had been intended to convey such authority, would our Lord have left them so entirely unsupported, so isolated of collateral testimony to that effect? Certainly not. If an import so momentous had been meant, we should have had plain testimony to that effect, and plain injunctions, and plain rules, for the offering up the continuous sacrifice. The absence of these is negative proof against the priestly assumption.

Again: had it been intended to convey an authority to a chosen class, a deputed endless Apostolic body, a series of "external priests," the apostles would have been careful that themselves, to the exclusion of the brethren, should have offered the sacrifice. They would have prevented those who are now styled laymen from interfering. But how stands the matter? We do not read of the apostles' sacrifice. We do not even read that the apostles administered the Lord's Supper. In this, again, is negative proof against the priestly assumption.

But we may go a little farther than this, and assert that what little testimony is given of the primitive practice, of the infant churches in this matter, is opposed to, and becomes positive proof against it. We read, addressed to the Corinthians, "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken." This affords some intimation of the early mode of taking the Lord's Supper. Is there any appearance of sacrifice in this? Is it not perceived, at once, that so far from the order of a priestly sacrifice prevailing, the Lord's Supper was observed in the fashion of an ordinary meal? It is for a slovenly mode, and irreverent manner, the Corinthians are rebuked: making it plain that the Apostolic practice was of the most simple character, having no relation whatever to a propitiatory sacrifice. This is made evident by the concluding words "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye

come together to eat, tarry one for another; and if any man hunger, let him eat at home."

The Corinthians were condemned for the gluttonous, irreverent, and unseemly manner in which they partook of the Lord's Supper. This afforded a special occasion for the directions of Paul, and it may be supposed that he would have availed himself of it, to have laid down precise rules, if they had been needed. But no, nothing of the kind. He finishes his exhortation with the simple words "And the rest I will set in order when I come." If "the rest" were so momentous as Priestcraft would have us believe, can it be conceived that this, and the many occasions presented through a long ministry, should not have been seized for asserting the priestly power. Not one word about it through all the Acts of the Apostles. Can it be for one moment supposed, that if the Lord had intended to institute a continuous line of an Apostolic external representative priesthood to offer an "evermore" sacrifice, that an opportunity would be passed by for teaching it, and silence maintained upon a subject, that would, if intended, have been so vitally all-important? Nay, it is certain that this, and other opportunities, would not have been neglected. Our God does not, and did not sleep. No vital doctrine has escaped attention. Since there are no commands, we may be certain the doctrine sought to be established is false. And we may be certain, likewise, that the little that has been conveyed with reference to the Lord's Supper, and the ministry of the Word, are intended to guide God's people into right principles.

Let us look into Paul's teaching with respect to these matters, to ascertain whether its general tendency is favourable to the principle of a common ministering, or to an exclusive priestly power.

In the 11th and 14th chapters in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, will be found the few simple directions with reference to ministering, and prophesying, or teaching. Paul

writes, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things; and *keep the ordinances*, as I delivered them to you." Paul had given oral instructions for keeping the ordinances, and he commended the Corinthians for having observed them: but they did so in an unseemly way; Paul, therefore, desired to correct this, and the result was, the instructions given by letter, which we have in the 11th and 14th chapters, the intermediate being concerned in explaining two important principles in relation thereto, namely, spiritual gifts, and charity, or perfectness. On an occasion such as this, we may be quite sure that Paul would teach correctly "the keeping the ordinances." What he found amiss he would correct; and, in fact, what there was amiss, he did correct. Now, what was it he found amiss? Was it that the brethren indiscriminately ministered, and prophesied, or taught? No. This they did, but of this there is no complaint. Was it that the bread and wine was not properly consecrated? No. Then of what was there complained? It appears to have been a practice in the Corinthian Church for women to prophesy, or teach, and pray publicly with heads uncovered. This leads to the conclusion, that Paul's oral instructions concerning "the keeping the ordinances" were the very opposite to an exclusive clergy ministration. And it likewise shews that the general privileges granted by the Gospel were universal, except in regard to women. They publicly prayed and taught. This practice was condemned. It appears, likewise, that the Corinthians assembled in the evening, and ate a meal in celebration of the Lord's Supper (v. 20, 21, 22). And they did this in a gross, carnal manner. The carnal manner was condemned. The assembling to eat a meal was not condemned. They were instructed to eat it in a becoming manner, "When ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." The absence here, as well as everywhere else, of any instructions to transmute the bread by Apostolic hands, is proof that no such process was

needed. Not one word here about a continuous sacrifice. The instructions are based on decent, reverent conduct. Not a syllable about priestly consecration. Indeed, if there had been, it would have been at opposites with the Gospel of Grace. That the Eucharist was not intended to be after the manner of a sacrifice, the mode in which our Lord administered it after the resurrection is proof; it was then observed "as He sat at meat with them" (Luke xxiv. 30). Paul concludes his exhortations with reference to the Eucharist in these words, "If any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together to condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come." Of the rest we learn but very little more. But of the little we do learn, we find the teaching to be wholly opposed to exclusive ministration. Paul, having written "concerning spiritual gifts," and the more excellent way "charity," opens, in the 14th chapter, with "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Upon the subject of prophesying or teaching he goes on to descant. Here, again, is not the slightest reference to an exclusive privilege. Just the reverse. There is no exception with regard to men to prophesy or teach, "Ye may all prophesy, one by one, that all may learn, and all be comforted" (1 Cor. xiv. 31). The exception is alone with women, who are "to keep silence in the Churches" (1 Cor. xiv. 34). Similar instructions, with regard to the universal privilege among men, are given in the Epistle to Timothy; "I will therefore," writes Paul, "that men pray *everywhere*, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." The woman only is to learn, in silence, with all subjection (1 Tim. ii). Paul gives the basis for these instructions. He writes, "I would have you to know that the head of *every man* is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. xi). The man, in virtue of a natural descent from, and a natural heirship with, Christ, is to prophesy or pray with head uncovered, "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." He is to appear unveiled

in the presence of Deity. When Adam sinned, he hid himself from God. He dare not present himself. When God appeared unto Moses, He did so "in a thick cloud," and He charged Moses that the people should not "break through unto the Lord to gaze" (Ex. xix). In these our days, man has been brought nigh unto God through His beloved Son, and man can now approach uncovered, "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." Man, as restored in the image of God, through Christ, can now commune with God. He can minister to God. There are no exceptions among men. Every man, as having relation to Christ, is permitted to minister unto the Lord. The woman only may not publicly minister.* As the woman is of the man, so she derives her title to heirship with Christ through the man, and has her abiding interest in the man, for "neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." These principles are deep-seated in the origin of man and woman. Man, as restored to the image of God, has now an inherent imprescriptible right to commune with God, and to minister in His service.

This right pertained to man as man formed in the image of God. It was forfeited at the Fall, and restored again by Christ, who is the restorer of all things; so that men "may now serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness" (Luke i. 67—80). After man's fall, until the coming of Christ, men could not approach God, or worship Him, but in typical observances and typical sacrifices. Now, by the great sacrifice once offered, all men are brought nigh to God through Christ. Man, by this, is restored to his natural birthright. Some men may not claim it;

* It is not here intended that women are an inferior order, only that they may not publicly minister, as deriving their existence out of man, a remove farther in flesh than men from God. This teaching of the New Testament regards woman in her natural state. In her redeemed state, baptised by the Spirit into Christ, "there is neither male nor female: for all are one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 25—29.

some may be ignorant of the great privilege. Nevertheless, it is theirs. It belongs to man as man restored. Under the new covenant all men can hold direct communion with God through Christ. All men can become priests unto God. The New Testament is, therefore, wholly silent with regard to a ministering separated body.

Had an intervening, mediating, sacrificing body been established, Christ's sacrifice would not have been all-sufficient, complete, final;—man would not have been restored to communion with God;—the restitution of all things would not be fulfilled in Christ. The Atonement, and its consequences, are the causes why the utmost subtlety, and the most specious reasoning, are necessary to set up the sacerdotal past, and sacerdotal present, since the Atonement. In its completeness we find the origin of the principle of worship which followed of a common or universal ministering. The opposite course, which has no warrant in the New Testament, is opposed to Christianity. It strikes at the first principles, and attempts the overthrow of the work of Christ. It involves not alone a mere question between the claimed superiority of the few over the many, or a struggle between two bodies distinguished now as lay and clerical; but it questions the efficacy of the Atonement; it "crucifies the Lord of glory afresh, and puts Him to an open shame." The setting up a mediating, ministering body opens the inquiry, Whether the One Atonement is, or is not, all-sufficient. It presents for discussion—Whether the work which the Father gave the Son to do was or was not done—Whether the Son wrought a finished work. The principle of a mediating, vicarious, perpetuating sacrifice, beyond, or to complete, the One Sacrifice, carries back into typical and ceremonial sacrifices.

On the perfect sacrifice we need not enlarge. Those who advocate the perpetuation of an "evermore" sacrifice are not so bold, or so ignorant, as to declare the work of Christ a half-finished work. They know and they declare it to be perfect.

Mr. Manning repudiates the thought that the Eucharist is a sacrifice added to the sacrifice of the cross. He writes, "Nothing can be added to that which is already perfect."

Still, he maintains the Eucharist to be a true sacrifice. As the sacrifices under the law looked forward to the One Sacrifice, so the sacrifice under the Gospel looks backward to the One Sacrifice. Under the latter, through a deputed, visible, external priesthood, Christ is offering Himself "evermore:" "He truly offers Himself for us perpetually, both in heaven and earth, through and with His mystical body, the Church." "In this, then, we see what is the Christian sacrifice. It is Christ in heaven offering Himself in visible presence; and on earth, by His ministering priesthood, offering Himself in the sacrament of His body and blood." All this sounds pretty in theory, and would be important in fact, if God had so decreed. But He has not so decreed. We defy Mr. Manning, or Mr. Anybody else, to prove from Scripture the existence, under the Gospel, of a visible, external, ministering, sacrificing priesthood; and, of course, challenge to the proof of any authority for offering Christ "perpetually" as an "evermore" sacrifice. This state of things exists only in the prurient imagination of sacerdotalism. It is painful to make this assertion, but Truth demands it. Very little tenderness is due to ultra-Romanism. The system is based in fraud and wickedness, and should be so dealt with, and those who lead in it condemned. We would except from the condemnation the earnest, talented, honest, but misguided men, who have recently accepted the principles of Romanism. Lured by an ignis fatuus in the shape of the word Church, and mistaking its high and proper character, they wander amid bogs and quagmires, and excite our commiseration rather than our condemnation.

Though in the New Testament cannot be found the appointment of an external priesthood, or any statement for the necessity of a continuous "evermore" sacrifice, but, on the contrary, a teaching just the reverse, yet our Lord gave instructions for a

perpetual observance of the Lord's Supper in the words, "This do in remembrance of me." What did our Lord intend by this command?

The only comment in the Scriptures upon this command is by Paul, who says, "Ye do shew the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26). What is Paul's meaning in these words? He could not mean a positive exhibition of Christ's death in transmuted elements: a sacrificing priesthood, and a perpetual sacrifice, or perpetual sacrifices, being foreign to the Gospel.

"To shew the Lord's death," plainly, is not to crucify Him. To "crucify Him afresh is to put Him to an open shame." It cannot be commanded that Christ should be put to an open shame. It cannot, therefore, be intended that a positive exhibition of the Lord's death be shewn. To put the Lord to death was a crime; and to do so metaphorically, or spiritually, is a crime. To exhibit the Lord's death literally in transmuted bread and wine could not, therefore, be intended. If it were criminal literally to crucify, it is criminal metaphorically to crucify.

It may be said, the act of sacrifice did not consist in the crucifixion. True; this was a wicked act of others. The sacrifice consisted in our Lord's voluntary offering of His own body and blood. And by His own body and blood I do not mean the bread and wine which He called His body and blood at the Paschal Supper. I mean His own very body and blood. The bread and wine was a symbolic predictive offering. It taught that our Lord voluntarily submitted Himself as a sacrifice. He represented thereby in figure the true Paschal Lamb. And, as significant that the offering was a voluntary offering, He brake bread and said, "This is my body," and poured out wine and said, "This is my blood," which is shed for many. He intimated thereby that His was a free-will-offering. He had power to take up His life, and He had power to lay it down. The human nature He had assumed He desired to be crucified. This was in the councils of the Almighty. He submitted His human

nature to the will of the Father. The cup of mortality is a bitter cup, and He would have passed it from His lips if it had been possible: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." It was not possible. It is linked with corporeal life. The human must be subdued to the divine, and it must be offered up as a sacrifice or oblation to the divine. The offering of the human indicates the destruction of the natural to the spiritual. The natural is sown to become the spiritual, but it must die to become the spiritual (1 Cor. xv. 36). The natural, or human, must be crucified, or overcome, that the spiritual may live (1 Cor. xv. 35 to the end). All this is taught by the sacrifice once offered for the sins of the world. The sacrifice did not consist in the crucifixion: this, as we have said, was an external act of others. The internal act of Christ, or the willing offering of His human body, was the sacrifice. As our great High Priest, it was needful that "this man should have somewhat to offer" (Heb. viii. 3). The necessity is involved in the relation which corporeal humanity bears to spiritual life. Christ was, therefore, led as a lamb to the slaughter willingly. If He had chosen, had He not ten thousand angels, who at His bidding could have cast down His enemies? But He did not choose to thwart the malicious purpose of His foes. He desired to submit His human nature to the will of the Father, and the will of the Father was that it should be sacrificed. As the Son of man, it was needful that the manhood should suffer to be made perfect (Heb. ii. 10). Our Lord exhibited in His own person this principle as pertaining to man's being. The sacrifice was the willing offering of His human body—thereby "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26).

Applying this to the inquiry, What does Paul mean by shewing the Lord's death? we ascertain that he could not have intended a sacrifice of Christ's true body and blood in the Eucharist; but he meant by a mimic symbolic representation to keep alive a

remembrance of Christ's death, in accordance with the words of our Lord—"Do this in *remembrance* of me."

It should be observed, that though Romanists contend for the literal interpretation of our Lord's words, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," yet they do not consider our Lord's true sacrifice to consist in the breaking of bread and the pouring out wine. They know and acknowledge that it consists in the *bloody* offering. They acknowledge the offering at the Paschal Supper to be a symbolic offering. How is it, then, that they contend that an imitation of the symbolic act should do more than that which they imitate? This is manifestly a great assumption.

The false doctrine of a repeated or continuous sacrifice, St. Paul is earnest in opposing. He writes, "Christ should not offer Himself often, as the High Priest entered into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now, once in the end of the world, hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. ix.) The language of St. Paul is framed upon the principle of a finished work. He is declaring the difference between the old and the new covenants in this respect, shewing that the old was a figure for the time then present, and that the figure had reference to the finished work, by which "the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Now this offering we find declared to be, "once for all;" and, again, "one sacrifice for sins for ever;" and, again, "By one offering, He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" and, again, "Under the new covenant, God's laws are put into men's hearts, and are written in their minds, and, by this covenant, their sins and their iniquities God will remember no more; now, where remission of these is, "there is no more offering for sins" (Heb. viii. ix. x).

An attempted continuous repetition of the true sacrifice, as

"propitiatory for the living and the dead," is hostile to Christ, and a practical denial of the Atonement "once offered," and opposes the doctrine of a finished work, Paul could not, therefore, mean that the Lord's death was to be shewn by repeated sacrifices, or by a continuous sacrifice.

The theory of simple commemoration explains the absence of the appointment of an external priesthood, and of strictly laid down rules for the observance of the Eucharist, and shews the propriety of Paul's words "Let all things be done decently and in order."

The declarations of Paul, that "Whosoever shall partake unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord"—and, "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Cor. xi. 27—29), are to be regarded spiritually; for, in this sense only, can it be shewn the Eucharist is intended. Any act done in the name of the Lord, without reference to God's presence, would be sacrilegious. How much more an act, which professes symbolically to feed on, so as to be spiritually nourished in Christ. In these declarations, the Lord's Corporeal Presence is not intended. Those who, among the Corinthians, partook unworthily, were not guilty of actually crucifying the Lord. Spiritually guilty they were, because they did not recognize Christ's spiritual presence.

When the levitical Hebrew polity was overthrown, then passed away for ever "the law of ordinances contained in commandments," and upon its ruins was raised a religion wholly of grace. For confirmation of this, compare Col. ii. 13—23 with Rom. v. Under the Hebrew dispensation, a priestly intervention between God and man was decreed; but when Christ came this state of things was for ever set aside, and "a new and living way consecrated for us," which is called "the vail, His flesh" (Heb. x). By this we enter into "the holiest of all," to which before only the high priest entered (Heb. ix). Though

we enter through "the vail, Christ's flesh," the flesh is not transmuted bread, or now-existing flesh. The flesh of Christ was, laid aside when the Son had fully wrought the work given Him to do (1 Cor. xv. 50). The flesh through which men enter into the holiest is called "the vail," to signify the mysterious communication between God and man. Though not now in flesh, yet Christ liveth to make intercession. He liveth in His acts, in His Word, and as God once manifest in flesh. Christ is, therefore, at the right hand of God, not literally, for "a spirit hath not flesh and bones" (Luke xxiv. 39), and, therefore, not a right hand; but spiritually, where He ever liveth to make intercession. Terms having relation to a flesh and blood body are used, because men are fitted to receive instruction through images drawn from the connections with our material state and the material things around us. Though not literally at the right hand, He truly liveth, and hath opened a living way; so that, "If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father." "If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins." His "one sacrifice once offered" is full and all-atoning. No other sacrifice avails. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*" (Heb. x. 26). Yea, say Romanists, Paul's words are not true, there remains "the sacrifice of the mass, propitiatory for the living and the dead, which removes even heinous crimes and sins." Ah! my dear Romanist brethren, put no faith in it. You will cheat your own souls, and probably rob your offspring. "Put your trust alone in God at all times, for he careth for you." Enter into the living way which Christ hath consecrated—that is, trust on Christ's Mediation, and feed spiritually on Him and on His Word, that you may be conformed to His image, and become truly sons of God; then, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become white as snow."

We have contended, in the preceding paper on Baptism, that Christ is the ransom for the sins of the whole world. We shall enter more fully on this important subject in the next, we, therefore, for the present, dismiss it, satisfied that we have said enough to shew, that repeated sacrifices, and a continuous "evermore" sacrifice, are monstrous fallacies. They are also cheats upon mankind, opening doors for vile abuses, tending not alone to the worldly enrichment * and power of the pseudo-operating class, but wholly injurious to the souls of those who put faith in them.

While we view the Eucharist as commemorative, we esteem it, in common with others, spiritually sustentatious. We need not dwell on this portion of the subject. All alike deem its celebration a means whereby, through a material act, symbolically is presented true nourishment in Christ. We differ from others who think its efficacy dependent on right consecration. We deny the agency of what is called "a ghostly power." We think the Lord's Supper to be fully celebrated when any number of persons meet together, and acquiesce in celebrating it. The order, or form, we deem only important so far as a decency and order, and a reverent manner, be observed. Spiritually, we discern the Lord's body, and, believing in His Spiritual Presence, demand that a due solemnity should prevail.

The false claims of the Clergy Church are as baseless as an inverted cone. They have no foundation in proper Christianity. They arose out of a preceding state of things, and are not based in Christianity. They regard the past, and not the present. They have no relation to the Gospel, and must fall. They will be looked upon soon as things that have been. Not that the soon will be in our generation. The levitical principle will struggle for re-elevation and re-organization; man is too prone

* So much has this been the case in bygone ages, that, as most of my readers know, it became necessary to make laws to prevent whole countries from becoming ecclesiastical property.

to fleshly human principles of action to give up silently, and without a struggle, the flattering unction of "dead works to serve the living God." Some, "for filthy lucre's sake," will wilfully blind their eyes to the truth. Priestcraft will struggle for existence—still claim to act in God's name—still claim to present an oblation of Christ's body and blood—still claim "to immolate in a bloodless manner that same Christ"—still claim to be God's helpers in the work of redemption. Oh! monstrous acts!—dishonouring to God, an open shame to Christ, and a refuge of lies offered to fallen men. Fellow Christians, let not your hearts repose in them; let not those who are dead in trespasses and sins think they can be made alive by a sacrifice the pure invention of priestcraft. Redemption from sin, and life with God, can only be had in Christ, who is "the resurrection and the life." In the One Atonement, "once offered," can guilty men plead justification before God; and not all the masses ever performed can add to, or take from, its efficacy. The Eucharist was not instituted to give force to the Atonement. It was instituted to keep alive the remembrance of it, and to be a means whereby our mixed nature here may be spiritually nourished by a material observance.

The state of things which have existed in Christendom have been portrayed by the Hebrew prophets, "The gold is made dim, the fine gold is changed." The Lamentations of Jeremiah are full of it. They are supposed to concern chiefly the overthrow of the ancient city Jerusalem, whereas they are full of the degraded condition of Christendom. "The prophets have seen vain and foolish things for her; and they have not discovered her iniquity to turn away her captivity; but have seen for her false burdens and causes of banishment. All that pass by clap their hands at her; they hiss, and wag their head at the *daughter* of Jerusalem, saying, "Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?" (Lam. ii). "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the

prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof" (Jer. v). It is very flattering to poor human nature to conceive a power of communicating pardon, and peace, and life, and health. And if the ignorance of men help to foster this conceit, can we wonder that the clergy cling with tenacity to false doctrines so gratifying to their pride. Let the idea pass away of a separated, privileged, mediating class, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, or a true propitiatory sacrifice, will speedily follow. The abominations which now obtain, and which are to be seen in every papal cathedral city in all the barbaric splendour of pagan devotion, will pass away, as have done the ministrations of the priests of Baal, and of other heathen deities. Curiously enough, while recently present during high mass at Notre Dame, Paris, the right-hand candle nearest the little box at the altar, wherein is deposited the crucifix, and before which the bowing and scraping *par règle* take place, flickered during the service (while all the others burnt brightly throughout), until the bread was brought in to be consecrated, when it went wholly out—singularly significant of the state of the Roman Church.

The whole proceeding, with few exceptional acts, was so characteristic of pagan idolatry, that a friend, who accompanied me, wisely remarked, "This exhibits in stronger colours than have been before presented to me, the necessity there was for the coming, and for the teaching, of the Saviour." One exception to the heathenism displayed was the distribution of the bread to the people, which is worthy of imitation. Unlike the Church of England, which presents the bread separately to each at the altar, it is passed in baskets among the people, and those who are willing partake thereof. If this were accompanied with the wine, the practice would be unexceptionable. In administering the consecrated wafer at another service the practice is wholly different. The intending recipients leave the body of the nave, and proceed to the altar rails, when a priest puts a wafer into

the mouth of each. All the Romish services are affairs of the priests. They are scarcely regarded as common acts of united worship. The priests turn towards the altar with their backs to the people, and even read in the same attitude. Everything is performed as sacrifices to, and as appeals before, "images of things in heaven," or, things of earth. The people perform their devotions at the same time, either in the nave concurrently with the priests, or in side chapels before images of the Virgin, or of reputed saints. These are the general heathen features of a so-called Christian temple. The root of all this evil is priestly power. Cut this away, and away go with it the doctrine of transubstantiation, propitiatory sacrifices, and idolatrous worship. These are all reared and nourished upon it, and by it, and owe their present existence to it.

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